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THE VISITS OF ELIZABETH

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IN THE HOMESTEAD OF

Sarah Orne Jewett

AT SOUTH BERWICK, MAINE

BEQUEATHED BY

Theodore Jewett Eastman

A.B. 1901 - M.D. 1905

1931

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The Visits of Elizabeth

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THE VISITS OF ELIZABETH

By ELINOR GLYN

JOHN LANE: THE BODLEY HEAD
LONDON & NEW YORK · *MDCCCCI*

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Nazeby Hall

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The Visits of Elizabeth

NAZEBY HALL

IT was perhaps a fortunate thing for Elizabeth that her ancestors went back to the Conquest, and that she numbered at least two Countesses and a Duchess among her relatives. Her father had died some years ago, and, her mother being an invalid, she had lived a good deal abroad. But, at about seventeen, Elizabeth began to pay visits among her kinsfolk. It was after arriving at Nazeby Hall, for a Cricket Week, that she first wrote home.

NAZEBY HALL, *26th July.*

DEAREST MAMMA, — I got here all right, without even a smut on my face, for Agnès tidied me up in the brougham before we arrived at the gate. The dust in the train was horrid. It is a nice house. They were at tea when I was ushered in; it was in the hall

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Afternoon Tea — I suppose it was because it was so windy outside. There seemed to be a lot of people there; and they all stopped talking suddenly, and stared at me as if I were a new thing in the Zoo, and then, after a minute, went on with their conversations at the point they had left off.

Lady Cecilia pecked my cheek, and gave me two fingers; and asked me, in a voice right up at the top, how were you. I said you were better, and — you know what you told me to say. She murmured something while she was listening to what a woman with a sweet frock and green eyes was saying at the other end of the table. There was heaps of tea. She waved vaguely for me to sit down, which I did; but there was a foot-stool near, and it was half dark, so I fell over that, but not very badly, and got safely to my seat.

Lady Cecilia — continuing her conversation across the room all the time — poured out a cup of tea, with lumps and *lumps* of sugar in it, and lots of cream, just what you would give to a child for a treat! and she handed it to me, but I said, "Oh! please,

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Lady Cecilia, I don't take sugar!" She has such bulgy eyes, and she opened them wide at me, perfectly astonished, and said, "Oh! then please ring the bell; I don't believe there is another clean cup." Everybody stopped talking again, and looked at me, and the green-eyed lady giggled — and I rang the bell, and this time did n't fall over anything, and so presently I got some tea. Just as I was enjoying such a nice cake, and watching all the people, quite a decent man came up and sat down behind me. Lady Cecilia had not introduced me to anybody, and he said, "Have you come a long way?" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "It must have been dusty in the train," and I said it was — and he was beginning to say something more, when the woman with the green eyes said, "Harry, do hand me the cucumber sandwiches," and so he had to get up, and just then Sir Trevor came in, and he was glad to see me. He is a jolly soul, and he said I was eight when he last saw me, and seemed quite surprised I had grown any taller since! Just as though people could stay at eight! Then

Afternoon Tea

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Afternoon Tea

he patted my cheek, and said, "You're a beauty, Elizabeth," and Lady Cecilia's eyes bulged at him a good deal, and she said to me, "Would n't you like to see your room?" and I said I was n't a bit in a hurry, but she took me off, and here I am; and I am going to wear my pink silk for dinner, and will finish this by-and-by.

12.30. — Well, I have had dinner, and I found out a good many of their names — they mostly arrived yesterday. The woman with the green eyes is Mrs. de Yorburgh-Smith. I am sure she is a *pig*. The quite decent man, "Harry," is a Marquis — the Marquis of Valmond — because he took Lady Cecilia in to dinner. He is playing in the Nazeby Eleven.

There is a woman I like, with stick-out teeth; her name is Mrs. Vavaseur. She knows you, and she is awfully nice, though so plain, and she never looks either over your head, or all up and down, or talks to you when she is thinking of something else. There are heaps more women, and the eleven men, so we are a party of about twenty-five; but you will see their names in the paper.

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Such a bore took me in! He began about the dust again, but I could not stand that, so I said that every one had already asked me about it. So he said "Oh!" and went on with his soup. *Afternoon Tea*

At the other side was another of the Eleven, and he said, Did I like cricket? And I said, No, I hated always having to field (which was what I did, you know, when I played with the Byrne boys at Biarritz); and I asked him if he was a good player, and he said "No," so I said I supposed he always had to field too, then; and he said, No, that sometimes they allowed him a bat, and so I said I was sure that was n't the same game I played; and he laughed as if I had said something funny — his name is Lord George Lane — and the other one laughed too, and they both looked idiots, and so I did not say any more about that. But we talked on all the time, and every one else seemed to be having such fun, and they all call each other by pet names, and shorten up all their adjectives (it *is* adjectives I mean, not

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The Cricket Talk

adverbs). I am sure you made a mistake in what you told me, that all well-bred people behave nicely at dinner, and sit up, because they don't a bit; lots of them put their elbows on the table, and nearly all sat anyhow in their chairs. Only Lady Cecilia and Mrs. Vavaseur behaved like you; but then they are both quite old — over forty.

They all talk about things that no stranger could understand, but I dare say I shall pick it up presently. And after dinner, in the drawing-room, Lady Cecilia did introduce me to two girls — the Roose girls — you know. Well, Lady Jane is the best of the two; Lady Violet is a lump. They both poke their heads, and Jane turns in her toes. They have rather the look in their eyes of people with tight boots. Violet said, "Do you bicycle?" and I said, "Yes, sometimes;" and she said, with a big gasp: "Jane and I adore it. We have been ten miles since tea with Captain Winchester and Mr. Wertz."

I did not think that interesting, but

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still we talked. They asked me stacks of questions, but did not wait for the answers much. Mr. Wertz is the African millionaire. He does not play cricket, and, when the men came in afterwards, he crossed over to us, and Jane introduced him to me when he had talked a little. He is quite a sort of gentleman, and is very much at home with every one. He laughed at everything I said. Mrs. Smith (such bosh putting "de Yorburgh" on!) sat on a big sofa with Lord Valmond, and she opened and shut her eyes at him, and Jane Roose says she takes every one's friend away; and Lord George Lane came up, and we talked, and he was n't such an idiot as at dinner, and he has nice teeth. All the rest, except the Rooses and me, are married — the women, I mean — except Miss La Touche, but she is just the same, because she sits with the married lot, and they all chat together, and Violet Roose says she is a cat, but I think she looks nice; she is so pretty, and her hair is done at the right angle, because it is like Agnès does mine, and she has nice scent on; and

An African Millionaire

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An African Millionaire

I hope it won't rain to-morrow, and good-night, dear Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

P. S. — Jane Roose says Miss La Touche will never get married; she is too smart, and all the married women's men talk to her, and that the best tone is to look rather dowdy; but I don't believe it, and I would rather be like Miss La Touche.

E.

Elizabeth received an immediate reply to her letter, and the next one began:

NAZEBY HALL, *28th July.*

DEAREST MAMMA, — I *am* sorry you find I use bad grammar and write incoherently, and you don't quite approve of my style; but you see it is just because I am in a hurry. I don't speak it; but if I must stop to think of grammar and that, I should never get on to tell you what I am doing here, so do, dear Mamma, try and bear it bravely. Well, everybody came down to breakfast yesterday in a hat, and every one was late — that

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is, every one who came down at all, the rest had theirs upstairs. *The Cricket Match*

The cricket began, and it was really a bore. We sat in a tent, and all the nice men were fielding (it is always like that), and the married lot sat together, and talked about their clothes, and Lady Doraine read a book. She is pretty too, but has big ears. Her husband is somewhere else, but she does not seem to miss him ; and the Rooses told me her hair used to be black, and that they have not a penny in the world, so I think she must be clever and nice to be able to manage her clothes so well. They are perfectly lovely, and I heard her say her maid makes them.

Miss La Touche happened to be next me, so she spoke to me, and said my hat was "too devey for words" (the blue one you got at Caroline's); and by-and-by we had lunch, and at lunch Lord Valmond came and sat by me, and so Mrs. Smith did too, and she gushed at me. He seemed rather put out about something — I suppose it was having to field all the time — and she talked to him across me, and she called him

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The Cricket Match

"Harry" lots of times, and she always says things that have another meaning. But they all do that — repeat each other's Christian names in a sentence, I mean — just like you said that middle-class people did when you were young, so I am sure everything must have changed now.

Well, after lunch, all the people in the county seemed to come; some of them had driven endless miles, and we sat apart, I suppose to let them see how ordinary we thought them; and Lady Cecilia was hardly polite, and the others were more or less rude; but presently something happened — I don't know what — and the nice men had not to field any more. Perhaps they could not stand it any longer, and so every one who had been yawning woke up, and Mr. Wertz, who had been writing letters all this time, appeared, and Lady Doraine made room for him beside her, and they talked; and when our Eleven had drunk something they came and lay on the grass near us, and we had such a nice time. There is a beautiful man here, and his name is Sir Dennis Desmond, and his grandfather was an Irish King, and

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he talks to me all the time, and his mother looks at him and frowns; and I think it silly of her, don't you? And if I were a man I would n't visit with my mother if she frowned at me. Do you know her? She dresses as if she were as young as I am. She had a blue muslin on this morning, and her hair is red with green stripes in it, and she is all white with thick pink cheeks, and across the room she does n't look at all bad; but close! Goodness gracious she looks a hundred! And I would much sooner have nice white hair and a cap than look like that, would n't you? I 'll finish this when I come to bed. *Sir Dennis Desmond*

12.30. — What *do* you think has happened? Sir Dennis sat beside me on the sofa just as he did last night — but I forget, I have not yet told you of yesterday and last night; but never mind now, I must get on. Well, he said I was a perfect *darling*, but that he never could get a chance to say a word to me alone, but that if I would only drop my glove outside my door it would be all right; and I thought that such a *ridiculous* thing to say, that I could n't help laughing,

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Sir Dennis Desmond

and Lady Cecilia happened to be passing, and so she asked me what I was laughing at, and so I told her what he had said, and asked why? There happened to be a pause just then and, as one has to speak rather loud to Lady Cecilia to attract her attention, every one heard, and they all looked *flabergasted;* and then all shrieked with laughter, and Sir Dennis said so crossly, "Little fool!" and Lady Desmond simply glared at me, and Lady Cecilia said, "Really, Elizabeth!" and Sir Dennis got purple in the face, and Jane Roose whispered, "How could you dare with his wife listening!" and every one talked and chaffed. It was too stupid about nothing; but the astonishing part is, that funny old thing I thought was the mother turns out to be *his wife!*

Imagine! years and years older than him! Jane Roose said he had to marry her because her husband died; but I think that the most absurd reason I ever heard, don't you? Lots of people's husbands die, and they don't have to get married off again at once — so why should that ugly old thing,

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specially when there are such heaps of nice girls about? *A Man of Honour*

Jane Roose said it was so honourable of him, but I call it crazy — unless, perhaps, he was a great friend of the husband's, who made him promise when he was dying, and he did not like to break his word. How he must have hated it! I wonder if he had ever met her before, or if the husband made him take her, a pig in a poke. I expect that was it, because he never could have done it if he had ever seen her.

I can't think why he is so cross with me, but I am sorry, as he is such a nice man. Now I am sleepy, and it is frightfully late, so I suppose I had better get into bed. Agnès came up, and has been fussing about for the last hour. Best love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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NAZEBY HALL, *30th July.*

Ghosts in the Corridor

DEAREST MAMMA,—Yesterday was the best day we have had yet; the nice men had not to field at all, and the stupid cricket was over at four o'clock, and so we went into the gardens and lay in hammocks, and Miss La Touche had such nice shoes on, but her ankles are thick.

The Rooses told me it was n't "quite nice" for girls to loll in hammocks (and they sat on chairs)—that you could only do it when you are married; but I believe it is because they don't have pretty enough petticoats. Anyway, Lady Doraine and that horrid Smith creature made a place for me in the empty hammock between them, and, as I knew my "frillies" were all right, I hammocked too, and it was *lovely*. Lord Valmond and Mr. Wertz were lying near, and they said agreeable things, at least I suppose so, because both of them—Lady Doraine and Mrs. Smith—looked purry-purry-puss-puss. They asked me why I was so sleepy, and I said because I had not slept well the

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last night — that I was sure the house was haunted. And so they all screamed at me, "Why?" and so I told them, what was really true, that in the night I heard a noise of stealthy footsteps, and as I was not frightened I determined to see what it was, so I got up — Agnès sleeps in the dressing-room, but, of course, *she* never wakes — I opened the door and peeped out into the corridor. There are only two rooms beyond mine towards the end, round the corner, and it is dimly lit all night. Well, I distinctly saw a very tall grey figure disappear round the bend of the hall! When I got thus far every one dropped their books and listened with rapt attention, and I could see them exchanging looks, so I am sure they know it is haunted, and were trying to keep it from me. I asked Mrs. Smith if she had seen or heard anything, because she sleeps in one of the rooms. She looked perfectly green, but she said she had not heard a sound, and had slept like a top, and that I must have dreamt it.

Ghosts in the Corridor

Then Lady Doraine and every one talked at once, and Lord Valmond asked did any

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Ghosts in the Corridor

one know if the London evening papers had come. But I was not going to be put off like that, so I just said, "I know you all know it is haunted and are putting me off because you think I 'll be frightened; but I assure you I am not, and if I hear the noise again I am going to rush out and see the ghost close."

Then every one looked simply *ahuri*. So I mean to get the ghost story out of Sir Trevor to-night after dinner — I had not a chance yesterday — as I am sure it is interesting. Mrs. Smith looked at me as if she wanted to poison me, and I can't think why specially, can you?

Twelve p.m. — I asked Sir Trevor if the house is haunted, and he said, "God bless my soul, no!" and so I told him, and he nearly had a fit; so I *know* it is, but I am not a bit frightened. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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NAZEBY HALL, *Sunday.*

DEAREST MAMMA, — Agnès and I go to Aunt Mary's by the 10.30 train to-morrow, and I am not a bit sorry, although I have enjoyed myself, and now I begin to feel quite at home with every one — at least, some of them; but such a tiresome thing happened last night. It was like this: After dinner it was so hot that we all went out on the terrace, and, as soon as we got there, Mrs. Smith and Lady Doraine and the rest said it was too cold, and went in again; but the moon was pretty, so I stayed alone, and presently Lord Valmond came out, and stood beside me. There is such a nice view, you remember, from there, and I did n't a bit want to talk.

A Kiss and a Blow

He said something, but I was n't listening, when suddenly I did hear him say this: "You adorable *enfant terrible*, come out and watch for ghosts to-night; and I will come and play the ghost, and console you if you are frightened!" And he put his horrid arm right round my waist, and kissed

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A Kiss and a Blow

me — somewhere about my right ear — before I could realise what he was at!

I *was* in a rage, as you can fancy, Mamma, so I just turned round and gave him the hardest slap I could, right on the cheek! He was furious, and called me a "little devil," and we both walked straight into the drawing-room.

I suppose I looked *savage*, and in the light I could see he had great red finger marks on his face. Anyway, Mrs. Smith, who was sitting on the big sofa near the window alone, looked up, and said in an odious voice, that made every one listen, "I am afraid, Harry, you have not enjoyed cooing in the moonlight; it looks as if our sweet Elizabeth had been difficult, and had boxed your ears!"

That made me *wild*, the impudence! That *parvenue* calling me by my Christian name! So I just lost my temper right out, and said to her, "It is perfectly true what you say, and I will box yours if you call me 'Elizabeth' again!"

Tableau! She almost fainted with astonishment and fury, and when she could get

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her voice decent enough to speak, she laughed and said — *Lord Valmond in Disgrace*

"What a charming savage! How ingenuous!"

And then Lady Cecilia did a really nice thing, which shows that she is a brick, in spite of having bulgy eyes, and being absent and tiresome. She came up to me as if nothing had happened, and said, "Come, Elizabeth, they are waiting for you to begin a round game," and she put her arm through mine and drew me into the billiard-room, and on the way she squeezed my arm, and said, in a voice quite low down for her, "She deserved it," and I was so touched I nearly cried. From where I sat at the card-table I could see Mrs. Smith and Lord Valmond, and they were quarrelling. She looked like green rhubarb juice, and he had the expression of "Damn!" all over him.

Of course I did not say good-night to him, and I hope I shall never see him again. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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300 EATON PLACE,
Tuesday, 2nd August.

London out of Season

DEAREST MAMMA, — The train from Nazeby was so late and Aunt Mary seemed to think it was my fault — so unreasonable of her, just because they had waited lunch for me. I don't believe I like visiting very near relations as much as ones further off. They feel they can say anything to you. I am glad I have only got to sleep here the one night. I had not eaten my omelette before Aunt Mary began about my hair. She said of course it was very nice curling like that, but it was a pity I did not wear a net over it all to keep it more tidy. She was sure you spoilt me, even though we are rich, letting me have such smart clothes. She had heard from Nazeby, that I had had on a fresh frock every day. I don't know who could have written to her. She has got to look much older in the two years we have been abroad and the corners of her mouth shut with a snap. Perhaps it is having to spend part of the year with her mother-in-law.

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Lettice and Clara are just the same as they were, not a bit of difference since they came out. They are as tidy as can be, not a hair escapes from their nets! and their heads look as if they had dozens of hairpins in them, and because it is out of the season they have gone back to their country high linen collars, and they look as if they were choking. I hate linen collars, don't you, Mamma? Two Ethridge aunts are staying here besides me, and we all have to sit together in the morning-room, as everything is covered up in the drawing-rooms, ready for being shut up next week, when they go to Scotland. After lunch the girls did nothing but question me about what we had done at Nazeby. They said Lady Cecilia only asks them to the dullest parties. They knew every one's name, they had carefully read them in the *Morning Post*. They wanted especially to know about Lord Valmond because Lettice had danced with him once this season. They thought him awfully good-looking. I said he was an odious young man and very rude. So Lettice said

Cousinly Curiosity

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Cousinly Curiosity

she supposed he had not spoken to me, as he never speaks to girls. I told them that was quite a mistake as he had spoken to me all the time, but I hated him. And do you know, Mamma, they looked as if they did not believe a word I was saying; which was not very polite I think.

When we got upstairs they wanted to see all my clothes, but fortunately Agnès had only taken out one or two things, and they asked me to let their maid take patterns of everything. Of course I could not refuse, but I hate my things being mauled over by strange females, and Agnès was simply furious. I am sure she will scratch the maid when she comes to ask for a frock. They tried on my hats all at the wrong angle, first Clara, then Lettice, and made faces and gave little screams at themselves in the glass, and no wonder, for they looked perfect guys in them, with their tight "tongy" hair. Then they tossed them on to the bed as they finished with them, and Agnès kept muttering to herself like distant thunder. Finally Lettice danced a *pas seul* with the white rose toque perched on the back

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of her head, and she made such kicks and jumps that it lurched off, and landed in the water jug! At that Agnès got beside herself. *On the Water Shoot*

"Fi! donc, Mademoiselle!" she screamed, "ça c'est trop fort!"

The hat is quite spoilt, so please write and order me another one from Caroline's, like a nice, sweet, pretty, darling Mamma. At tea they were all so interested when I told them I was going to stay in France with the de Croixmares. One of the Ethridge aunts (Rowena) pricked up her ears at once, and asked me if Madame de Croixmare was not my godmother, and had she not been a great friend of poor papa's. So I told her yes, and that I was going there for three weeks. She and Aunt Mary exchanged looks, I don't know why, but it irritated me, Mamma, and I rather snapped at Aunt Mary when she began about my hair again. And presently I heard her saying to the other aunt that it was a pity girls nowadays were allowed to be impertinent to their elders.

Of course there was not a thing to do, every one having left Town, so in the even-

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On the Water Shoot

ing Uncle Geoffrey took us to the Exhibition to go down in the Water Shoot. That is *lovely*, Mamma, only I had to sit beside Lettice, because Clara was frightened and would be with her father. A horrid man behind, who, I suppose, was not holding on, flopped right on to us at the bump in the water, and then said, "Beg pardon, dears," and it made Uncle Geoffrey so cross he would not let us go down any more, and we had to go home and to bed. I am just scribbling this before breakfast.

We go on to Great-aunt Maria's by the eleven train. I am glad Cousin Octavia is going to take me out next season instead of Aunt Mary, which was first suggested. I know I should not have been good with her. She is not a bit like you, darling Mamma. I hope you are better; I shan't see you again until next Saturday, when I leave Heaviland Manor. It is a long time. — With love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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Heaviland Manor

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HEAVILAND MANOR

HEAVILAND MANOR,
Wednesday, August 3rd.

A Quiet Evening

DEAREST MAMMA, — I can't think why you made me come here! Agnès has been so sniffy and condescending ever since this morning; but I have remarked that Uncle John's valet is only about forty and has a roving eye! so perhaps by to-morrow morning I shan't have my hair screwed off my head! But I feel for Agnès, only in a different way.

It is a stuffy, boring place. You remember the house — enormous, tidy, hideous, uncomfortable. Well, we had *such* a dinner last night after I arrived — soup, fish, everything popped on to the table for Great-uncle John to carve at one end, and Great-aunt Maria at the other! A regular aquarium specimen of turbot sat on its dish opposite him, while Aunt Maria had a huge lot of

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A Quiet Evening

soles. And there was n't any need, because there were four men-servants in the room who could easily have done it at the side; but I remember you said it was always like that when you were a little girl. Well, it got on to puddings. I forgot to tell you, though, there were plenty of candles on the table, without shades, and a "bouquet" of flowers, all sorts (I am sure fixed in sand), in a gold middle thing. Well, about the puddings — at least four of them were planted on the table, awfully sweet and jammy, and Uncle John was quite irritated with me because I could only eat two; and Aunt Maria, who has got as deaf as a post, kept roaring to old Major Orwell, who sat next her, "Children have no healthy appetites as in our day. Eh! what?" And I wanted to scream in reply, "But I am grown up now, Aunt Maria!"

Uncle John asked me every question over and over, and old Lady Farrington's false teeth jumped so once or twice that I got quite nervous. That is the party, me, Major Orwell, Lady Farrington, and Uncle and Aunt.

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When dessert was about coming, *every-thing* got lifted from the table, and before you could say "Jack Robinson" off whisked the cloth. I was so unprepared for it that I said "Oh!" and ducked my head, and that made the cloth catch on old Lady Farrington's cap — she had to sit on my side of the table, to be out of the draught — and, was n't it *dreadful*, it almost pulled it off, and with it the grey curls fixed at the side, and the rest was all bald. So that was why it was so loose — there was nothing to pin it to! And she glared at me, and fixed it as straight as she could, but it had such a saucy look all the rest of the evening. *A Quiet Evening*

I did apologise as well as I could, and there was such an awkward pause; and after dinner we had coffee in the drawing-room, and then in a little time tea, and between times they sat down to whist, all but Aunt Maria — so they had to have a dummy. She wanted to hear all about you, she said, and my going to visit in France; and so I had to bellow descriptions of your neuralgia, and about Mme. de Croixmare being my godmother, &c., and Aunt Maria says,

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A Quiet Evening

"Tut, tut!" as well as "Eh! what?" to everything. I had not remembered a bit what they were like; but I was only six, was n't I, when we came last?

After she had asked every sort of thing about you under the sun, she kept giving longing glances at the dummy's cards; so I said, "Oh! Aunt Maria, I am afraid I am keeping you from your whist." As soon as I could make her hear, you should have seen how she hopped up like a two-year old into the vacant seat; and they were far more serious about it than any one was at Nazeby, where they had hundreds on, and Aunt Maria and the others only played for counters — that long mother- o'-pearl fish kind. I looked at a book on the table, Lady Blessington's "Book of Beauty," and I see then every one got born with champagne-bottle shoulders. Had they been paring them for generations before, I wonder? Because old John, the keeper at Hendon, told me once that the best fox-terriers arrive now without any tails, their mothers' and grandmothers' and great-grandmothers' having been cut off for so long; but I wonder, if

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the fashion changed, how could they get long tails again? There must be some way, because all of us now have square shoulders. But what was I saying? Oh! yes, when I had finished the "Beauty Book," I heard Aunt Maria getting so cross with the old boy opposite her. "You 've revoked, Major Orwell," she said, whatever that means. *An Old English Dinner*

Then hot spiced port came in — it was such a close night — and they all had some, and so did I, and it was good; and then candles came. *Such* lovely silver, and so beautifully cleaned; and Aunt and Uncle kissed me. I dodged Lady Farrington's false teeth, because, after her cap incident, she might have bitten me. And Uncle said, "Too late, too late for a little one to sit up — no beauty sleep!" And Aunt Maria said, "Tut, tut!" and I thought it must be the middle of the night — it felt like it. But do you know, Mamma, when I got upstairs to my room it was only *half-past ten!*

I have such a huge room, with a four-post feather bed in it. I had let Agnès go to bed directly after her supper, with a

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An Old English Dinner

toothache, so I had to get undressed by myself; and I was afraid to climb in from the side, it was so high up. But I found some steps with blue carpet on them, as well as a table with a Bible, and a funny old china medicine spoon, and glass and water-jug on it; and the steps did nicely, for when I got to the top, I just took a header into the feathers. It seemed quite comfy at first, but in a few minutes, goodness gracious, I was suffocated! And it was such a business getting the whole mass on the floor; and then I did not know very well how to make the bed again, and I had not a very good night, and overslept myself in the morning. So I got down late for prayers. Uncle John reads them, and Aunt Maria repeats responses whenever she thinks best, as she can't hear a word; but I suppose she counts up, and, from long habit, just says "Amen" when she gets to the end of — thirty, say — fancying that will be right; and it is generally. Only Uncle John stopped in the middle to say, "Damn that dog!" as Fido was whining and scratching outside, so that put

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her out and brought in the "Amen" too soon. *Family Prayers*

After breakfast Aunt Maria jingled a large bunch of keys and said it was her day for seeing the linen-room, and would n't I like to go with her, as all young people should have "house-wifely" ideas? So I went. It is so beautifully kept, and such lovely linen, all with lavender between it; and she talked to the housekeeper, and looked over everything—she seemed to know each sheet by name! Then we went to the storeroom, all as neat as a new pin; and from there to interview all the old people from the village, who were waiting with requests, and some of them were as deaf as she is. So the housekeeper had to scream at both sides, and I *was* tired when we got back, and did want to rush out of doors; but I had to wait, and then walk between Lady Farrington and Aunt Maria up and down the path in the sun till lunch at one o'clock; and after that we went for a drive in the barouche, with the fattest white horses you ever saw, and a coachman just like Cinderella's one that had been a rat.

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Family Prayers

He seemed to have odd bits of fur on his face and under his chin, and Aunt Maria said that he suffered from a sore throat, that was why, which he caught at Aunt Mary's wedding; and so I counted up — and as Aunt Mary is your eldest sister, it must have been more than twenty years ago. I do call that a long sore throat, don't you? and I would n't keep a coachman with a beard, would you?

We went at a snail's pace, and got in at four o'clock, and then there was tea at half-past, with the nicest bread-and-butter you ever tasted. And after that I said I must write to you, and so here I am, and I feel that if it goes on much longer I shall do something dreadful. Now good-bye, dearest Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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HEAVILAND MANOR,
Friday, August 5th.

DEAREST MAMMA,— I am glad to-morrow will soon be here, and that I can come home, but I must tell you about yesterday. First, all the morning it rained, and what with roaring at Aunt Maria and holding skeins of wool for Lady Farrington, I got such jumps that I felt I should scream unless I got out; so after lunch, while they were both having a nap in their chairs, I slipped off for a walk by myself — it was still raining, but not much; I took Fido, who is generally a little beast, and far too fat.

Lord Valmond Reappears

We had had a nice scamper, and had turned to come back not far from the Park, when who do you think came riding up?— Lord Valmond! The last person one expected to see down here! He never waited a second when he saw me, but jumped off his horse and beamed — just as if we had parted the best of friends!!! *Did* you ever hear such impudence? Of course I should have walked on without recognising him, if I had been left to myself, but he took me so by sur-

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Lord Valmond Reappears

prise that I had shaken hands before I knew, and then it was too late to walk on. It appears he has a place down here which he never comes to generally, but just happened to now — to see how the young pheasants were doing. He began at once to talk, as if I had never been angry or boxed his ears at all! It really exasperated me, so at last I said he had better get on his horse again, as I wanted to run on with Fido; so then he said he had just been on his way to call on Aunt Maria, and would come with me.

I said I was sure that was n't true, as he was going the other way. So he said that he had only been going that way to give his horse a little exercise, and that he intended to go in at the other gate.

I said I was sure that was n't true either, as there was no way round that way, unless one jumped the park palings. So he said that was what he had intended to do. Just then we came to the turnstile of the right-of-way, so I slipped through and called out, "Then I won't keep you from your exercise," and walked on as fast as I could.

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Lady Farrington's Nap

What do you think he did, Mamma? Simply got on his horse, and jumped those palings there and then! I can't think how he was n't killed. There was almost no take-off, and the fence is so high. However, there he was, and I could not get away again, because, if I had run, the horse could easily have kept up with me. But I only said "Yes" and "No" all the way to the house, so he could not have enjoyed it much. We went straight to the drawing-room, where tea was almost up, and there was Lady Farrington alone — still asleep, and her cap had fallen right back, and all the bald was showing; and just then a carriage drove up to the door, and we heard visitors and the footsteps in the hall. I had just time to cry to Lord Valmond, "Keep them back while I wake her!" and then I rushed to Lady Farrington, and shouted in her ear, "Visitors! and — and — your cap is a little crooked!" "Eh! what?" she screamed, and her teeth as nearly as possible jumped on to the carpet. She simply flew to the mirror, but, as you know, it is away so high up she could n't see, so she

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Lady Farrington's Nap

made frantic efforts with her hands, and just got it to cover the bald, in a rakish, one-sided way, when the whole lot streamed into the room. Lord Valmond looked awfully uncomfortable. Goodness knows what he had said to them to keep them back! Anyway, Harvey announced "Mrs. and the Misses Clarke," and a thin, very high-nosed person, followed by two buffish girls, came forward. Lady Farrington said, "How d'ye do?" as well as she could. They were some friends of hers and Aunt Maria's, who are staying with the Morverns, I gathered from their conversation. They *must* have thought she had been on a spree since last they met! I could hardly behave for laughing, and did not dare to look at Lord Valmond.

They had not been there more than five minutes when another carriage arrived, and two other ladies were announced. "The Misses Clark!" The other Clarkes glared like tigers, and Lady Farrington lowered her chin and eyelashes at them (she has just the same manners as the people at Nazeby, although she is such a frump — it is be-

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cause she is an earl's daughter, I suppose), and she called out to Harvey at the top of her voice, "Let Lady Worden be told at once there are visitors." The poor new things looked so uncomfortable, that I felt, as I was Aunt Maria's niece, I at least must be polite to them; so I asked them to sit down, and we talked. They were jolly, fat, vulgar souls, who have taken the Ortons' place they told me, and this was their return visit, as the Ortons had asked Aunt Maria to call. They were quite old maids, past thirty, with such funny, grand, best smart Sunday-go-to-meeting looking clothes on. *An Afternoon Call*

It appears that Harvey had sent a footman up to Aunt Maria's door, to tell of the first Clarkes' arrival, and then, terrified by Lady Farrington's voice, had rushed up himself to announce the second lot, and he met Aunt Maria on the stairs coming down, and of course she never heard the difference between "Mrs." and the "Misses," and thought he was simply hurrying her up for the first set. So in she sailed all smiles, and as Mrs. Clarke was nearest the door,

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An Afternoon Call

she got to her first, and *was* so glad to see her.

"Dear, dear, *years* since we met, Honoria," she said; "and these are all your bonny girls, tut, tut!" and she looked at the fat Clarks who came next. "Ah! yes, I can see! What a wonderful likeness to poor dear Arthur!"

Furious glances from Mrs. Clarke, whose daughters are my age!

"And this must be Millicent," she went on, taking the second fat Clark's hand. "Yes, yes; why, she takes after you, my dear Honoria, tut, tut!" and she squeezed hands, and beamed at them all in the kindest way. Mrs. Clarke, bursting with fury, tried to say they were no relations of hers; but, of course, Aunt Maria could not catch all that, only the word "relations," and she then caught sight of the buff Clarklets in the background.

"Ah, yes! I see, these are your girls; I have mistaken your other relations for them." Then she turned again to the fat Clarks, evidently liking their jolly faces best. "But one can see they are Clarkes.

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Let me guess. Yes, they must be poor Henry's children!" At this, Lord Valmond had such a violent fit of choking by the tea-table, that Aunt Maria, who hears the oddest, most unexpected things, caught that, and saw him, and saying, "How d' ye do?" created a diversion. Presently I heard Lady Farrington roaring in a whisper into her ears the difference between the Clarkes and the Clarks, and the poor dear was so upset; but her kind heart came up trumps, and she was awfully nice to the two vulgar Clarks, who had the good sense to go soon, and then the others went. Then she got Lord Valmond on to her sofa, and he screamed such heaps of nice things into her ear, just as if she had been Mrs. Smith, and she was *so* pleased. And Uncle John came in, and they talked about the pheasants, and he asked Lord Valmond to dinner on Saturday night (to-morrow), and he looked timidly at me, to see if I was still angry with him and wanted him not to come, so I smiled *sweetly*, and he accepted joyfully. Is n't it lovely, Mamma? I shall be home

A Friendly Invitation

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A Friendly Invitation

with you by then, and Lady Farrington and Major Orwell are going too! So he will have to play dummy whist all the evening with Uncle and Aunt, and eat his dinner at half-past six! Now, good-night. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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HAZELDENE COURT,
Tuesday, 9th August.

DEAREST MAMMA,—There is a huge party here for the Horse Show, and I daresay I shall enjoy myself. We had no sooner got into the station at Paddington than in the distance I caught sight of Lord Valmond. I pretended not to see him, and got behind a barrow of trunks, and then slipped into the carriage and made Agnès sit by the door. We saw him walking up and down, and, just before the train started, he came and got into our carriage. He seemed awfully surprised to see me, said he had not an idea he should meet me, and apologised for disturbing me, but he said all the other carriages were full. He seemed so uppish and unconcerned that I felt obliged to ask him how he enjoyed his dinner with Aunt Maria on Saturday. He said he had enjoyed it awfully, and that Aunt Maria was a charming hostess. He asked me if I was going far down the line, or only just on the river. I said not very far. I tried to be as stiff as possible

The Horse Show

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Lord Valmond Presumes

and not speak, and I did not tell him where I was going, but, do you know, Mamma, there is no snubbing him. He said at once that he was going to Hazeldene Court, to stay with his cousins the Westaways. I said, "Indeed!" and he said, "Yes, are n't they cousins of yours too?" and when I said "Yes," he said he felt sure we were related, and might n't he call me Elizabeth!!! I just told him I thought him the rudest, most detestable man I had ever met; and if he spoke to me again at all, I should ask the guard to find me another carriage.

He was awfully surprised, and said he had not meant to be the least rude; he thought it was the custom for cousins to call each other by their Christian names, and *his* name was Harry. (Just as if I did not know that, after hearing Mrs. Smith calling him every few minutes!) I said in a freezing tone we were not related in any way, and I wished to read the paper, upon which he produced every imaginable kind, lots of ladies' papers that he could not possibly have

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wanted for himself. I don't know who he expected to meet. However, I would not have any of them, but looked at a *Punch* I had bought myself. You know that uncomfortable feeling one has when some one is staring at one — it makes one obliged to look up — so after a while our eyes met over the *Punch*, and he smiled, and his teeth are so white. All he said was, "I was thinking of the Clarkes and Clarks." And in spite of my being indignant with him I could not help laughing, when I remembered about them, and then it was hard to be very stiff again at once. *The Offending Dimple*

Just about this time Agnès went to sleep in the other corner, and the moment Lord Valmond saw she was really off, he bent forward and said in such a humble voice, that he was sorry he had offended me at Nazeby; he had yielded to a sudden temptation, and he could only ask me to forgive him. He had quite mistaken my character he said, he now saw I was a serious person, but he had been deceived by the dimple in my left cheek. (Now is n't it provoking, Mamma, to have a dimple like that, that gives

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The Offending Dimple

people the impression they may treat you with want of respect?) I said I did not believe a word of it, and, as we were only the merest acquaintances, it did not matter whether I forgave him or not, and I hoped he would not mention the subject again. He then asked me if I was going to stop at Hazeldene until Saturday. So you see, Mamma, he must have known I was going there all along; aren't men odd? You can't trust them one minute not to be deceiving you, only I think on the whole I prefer them to women, they can't copy your clothes at all events. After that he seemed to think we had quite made everything up, and went on talking in the friendliest way, but I *would not* thaw; he shall not have the chance of blaming my dimple again for any of his misconduct! At last I said I hated talking in the train, and pretended to go to sleep. But I could not get really off, because every time I opened my eyes just to see where we were, I found him looking at me. A huge omnibus was waiting for us when we arrived, and several more guests had come by the

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same train and we all drove to the house together. They were having tea on the croquet lawn — Lady Westaway and some other people, and the eldest son's wife. You remember what a fuss there was when he married, how Lady Westaway had hysterics for three days. Well, she looks as if she could have them again any moment. Mrs. Westaway is awfully pretty. She was lying in a swing chair, showing lots of petticoat and ankle. The ankle is n't bad, but the petticoat had common lace on it. She has huge turquoise earrings, and very stick-out hair arranged to look untidy with tongs. She smiles all the time, and wears lots of different colours. She calls every one by their Christian name, and always catches hold of the men's coats, or fixes their buttonholes or ties, or holds their arms and whispers: and every one is in love with her, and she has the greatest success. So I can't think, Mamma, why you have always told me never to do any of these things, when you want me to be a success so much. Her voice is dreadfully shrill, and such an odd pronunciation, but no one

An Attractive Woman

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An Attractive Woman

seems to mind that. I rather like her, she is so jolly but some of the women of the party won't speak to her, except to say disagreeable things. Jane Roose is here, she has been here since she left Nazeby (Violet is at the sea), and she came up to my room as we were going to dress, and I have only just got rid of her. She told me Mrs. Westaway was a "dreadful creature," and that no one would know her, if it was not for her mother-in-law receiving her, so they can't help it. And she could not understand what the men saw to admire in a low person like that. But I can see very well, Mamma, she is as pretty as can be, and probably the men don't notice about the lace being common, and all the colours, and those things. I must go down to dinner now, so good-bye, dear Mamma.—Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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HAZELDENE COURT,
Thursday, 11th August.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I shall be home with you almost as soon as you get this. But I must tell you about these last two days. The man I went in to dinner with the first night was so nice-looking, only he did not seem as if he could collect his thoughts enough to finish his sentences, and it left them sounding so silly sometimes, but I found out before we had begun the entrées that it was because Mrs. Westaway was sitting opposite, and he was gazing at her. She looked lovely, but not like any one I have seen yet since I stayed out. She had a diamond collar and two ropes of pearls (Jane Roose said they were imitation), and her arms quite bare and very white, but her skin must come off, because I could see a patch of white on a footman's coat where she accidentally touched when helping herself to potatoes. She had a huge tulle bow in her hair, and her earrings were as big as shillings. Lady Bobby Pomeroy said afterwards in the drawing-room to Jane Roose

Lady Bobby's Diversions

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Lady Bobby's Diversions

that she should not take any more of her meals downstairs with this "creature;" and she would not have come only that Bobby insisted, as he was showing some horses, and it is convenient. And so, do you know, Mamma, Lady Bobby has never come out of her room since, except just to go to the Horse Show, which she drove to with Mrs. Mannering in a hired fly. I don't call it very polite to the hostess, do you? This afternoon she amused herself from her bedroom window by shooting at rabbits just beyond the wire fence of the lawn with a rook rifle; she did not hit any rabbits, but she got a gardener in the leg, and the man was very angry, and bled a great deal, and had to be taken away, and I think it was very careless of her, don't you?

Lord Valmond was on his way to the window seat where Jane Roose and I were sitting the first night after dinner, but Mrs. Westaway caught hold of her husband's coat-tails as he passed and said quite loud, "Duckie, you must bring Lord Valmond and introduce him to me, we have n't met yet, and I want to know all

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your friends." So Billy Westaway, who is as obedient as a spaniel, secured Lord Valmond, and presently we saw them comfortably tucked into a small settee together, and there they stayed all the evening. She kept licking her lips as if he was something good to eat, and the next morning she fixed a rose in his button-hole at breakfast and called him "Cousin Val," and by lunch time it was plain "Val," and now it is "Harry." I do call it bad taste, don't you, Mamma? and she is n't half so pretty in broad daylight, and I don't like her at all now. Only I can't help laughing at Lady Westaway's face when "Phyllis" (that is Mrs. Westaway's name) says anything especially vulgar; Lady Westaways shudders, and takes a huge sniff at her smelling salts. She keeps them always with her in a long gold-topped bottle, and she has to use them almost every few minutes when Mrs. Westaway is in the room.

Two is Company

The Horse Show was rather nice; it is held in the park fairly close, and most of us strolled there in the morning before lunch to see the judging. Lord Valmond joined

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Two is Company

us, I was walking with Lord George Lane (you remember he was one of the Eleven at Nazeby). I was in a very good temper, Mamma, and we had been laughing at everything we said. He is quite a nice idiot, but, when Lord Valmond came, of course I talked as stiffly as possibly, and presently Lord George told him that he was singularly backward in copybook maxims, and that there was one he ought to write out and commit to memory, and it began with "Two's Company," upon which Lord Valmond stalked on in a rage.

The seats at the show were very hard boards, and the sun made one awfully drowsy; but about half-an-hour before lunch Lord Valmond came up again, and asked me if I should not like to go for a turn. I thought I had better, so as not to get cramp. He said he had been afraid he would never get the chance of speaking to me, I was always so surrounded. I told him I had only come now because of the cramp. I am quite determined, Mamma, not to unbend to him at all. I was not once agreeable, or any-

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thing but stiff and snubbing, and I am sure he has never been treated like that before, but it is awfully hard work keeping it up all the time, and when we got in to lunch I was quite tired. *On the Lake*

There were numbers of people at the show in the afternoon, and all in their best clothes. Lady Grace Fenton was showing two of her hunters, and she kept shouting to the grooms, and I did not think it was very attractive behaviour. She takes such strides you would think her muslin dress would split. I don't know why it is that so many people in the country are ugly and weather-beaten, and all their clothes hanging wrong.

Except the house party here, and a few from other big places, there was not a pretty person to be seen. We had a special reserved tent for tea, and Mrs. Westaway seemed to have every man in the place round her, and I heard one man come up and say, "Well, Phyllis, this is a joke to find you in this respectable hole; how do you like solid matrimony, old girl?" and I do think that sounded familiar and rude, don't you,

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On the Lake

Mamma? but Mrs. Westaway was n't a bit angry. She calls Billy "Duckie," and continually pats and caresses him; he does look such a fool, and I should hate to be fingered like that if I were a man, one must feel like a bunch of grapes with the bloom being rubbed off. Mrs. Westaway kept Lord Valmond with her all the rest of the time at the show, and then took him on the lake while we played croquet.

Lady Bobby went straight to her room and sat by the window, and every now and then shouted advice to Lord George who was playing with me. When we had finished, Lady Westaway took me to see the conservatories, and there we were joined by old Colonel Blake and Lord Valmond, I don't know how he had torn himself away from Mrs. Westaway! Jane Roose says Mrs. Smith would be mad if she was here. He asked me why I had walked on ahead so fast on the way back from the Show as he wanted me to go on the lake with him instead of Mrs. Westaway. When he had suggested going on it he had looked at me, but I would take no notice,

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and so he was obliged to go with Mrs. Westaway when she offered to come, and I was very unkind and disagreeable. I just said if he found me so, he need not speak to me at all, I did not care. We looked at one another like two wild cats for a moment. I am sure he wanted to slap me, and I should like to have scratched him, and then Lady Westaway diverted the conversation by asking me if I thought I should enjoy my French visit (how every one knows one's affairs !). I said I hoped I should, and I was starting next week. Lord Valmond at once pricked up his ears, and said he would be running over to Paris about then, as he was not going to Scotland till September, and he hoped I would let him look after me on the way. I said I did not know which day I was going, probably Wednesday, so as I am starting on Monday, Mamma, there will be no chance of his coming with me, which would annoy you very much I am sure. To-day we have done nothing but loll about and play croquet. Lady Bobby and the men and some other women went to

Paul and Virginia

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Paul and Virginia

the Show again in the morning, but I was having a match with Jane Roose, and so we did not bother to go.

This afternoon when Lady Bobby began her rabbit shooting it seemed so dangerous on the croquet lawn, especially after she hit the gardener, that we all went on the lake in the launch. We landed on the island, and somehow or other Lord Valmond and I got left alone in the Belvedere looking at the view. The others went off without us, which made me furious, as I am sure he did it on purpose. But when I accused him of it, he said such a thing would never have entered his head. He had a nasty smile all the time in the corner of his eye, and did not take the least pains about trying to undo the other little boat which we found at last, although I kept telling him we should be late for dinner. He said he wished we had not to go back at all, that he thought we should be very happy together on this little island like Paul and Virginia. I can't tell you, Mamma, what a temper I was in.

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I wish I had never met him — or that he had not been rude at Nazeby — it *is* so difficult to behave with dignity when a person has a nice voice and makes you laugh, although you are awfully cross with him inside. Then I have to be thinking all the time about my dimple not to let it come out, as that is what caused his rudeness, and with one thing and another it upsets me so, that my cheeks are always burning when I am with him, and I feel as if I should like to box his ears or cry; and I hope after to-morrow I shall never see him again. He rowed so slowly when we did get into the boat that I offered to do it, but he would not let me. I would not talk to him at all. When we got to the landing I jumped out so that he should not help me, and gave my head a crack against the pole in the boat house. I fancied I heard him saying, "Darling! have you hurt yourself? What a brute I am to tease you!" but I did not wait for any more. I ran to the house as fast as I could, and as he had to tie up the boat, I was just getting into the hall when he caught me up. My head hurt

The Hardships of a Marquis

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The Hardships of a Marquis

dreadfully, and I was so tired and cross, and everything, that the tears would come into my eyes. I did not want him to see, but I am afraid he did, so before he could speak I rushed on again and got safely to my room. I am sure it is very rude to call people "darling" without their leave, isn't it, Mamma?

I went in to dinner with a sporting curate who lives near, and he kept making his bread into crumbs on the cloth and then sweeping them up with his knife into a heap, between every course. What strange habits people have! After dinner Mrs. Westaway took Lord Valmond and sat in the window seat, and when he did get away, and was coming over to me, I said my head was aching from the knock I gave it, and came up to bed, and as he has to catch an early train in the morning I shan't come down until he has gone. I don't want to see him any more, it is too fatiguing quarrelling all the time, and one could not forgive him and be friends I suppose after such behaviour as his at Nazeby — could one, Mamma?

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Now good-night; I am sleepy. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

The Hardships of a Marquis

P.S. — I should hate to be a marquis always having to take the hostess in to dinner no matter how old and ugly she is, just because a duke is n't present.

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Château de Croixmare

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE

CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
16th August.

A Formidable Godmother

DEAREST MAMMA, — What a crossing we had, perfectly disgusting! The sky was without a cloud, but such a wind that every one was sick, so one could not enjoy oneself. Agnès became rapidly French too directly we landed at Dieppe, and the carriage was full of stuffy people, who would not have a scrap of window open; however, Jean was waiting for us at Paris. We snatched some food at the restaurant, and then caught the train to Vinant. Jean is quite good-looking, but with an awfully respectable expression. Any one could tell he was married even without looking at his wedding ring. He *was* polite, and made conversation all the time in the train, and as the engine kept

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A Formidable Godmother

puffing and shrieking I was obliged to continually say "*Pardon?*" so it made it rather heavy. I think he has changed a good deal since their wedding — let me see — that must be eight years ago, as I was nine then; I hardly remembered him.

Godmamma was waiting for us in the hall when we arrived. Château de Croixmare is a nice place, but I *am* glad I am not French. It was the hottest night of the year almost, and not a breath of air in the house, every shutter closed and the curtains drawn. Héloise had gone to bed with a *migraine*, Godmamma explained, but Victorine was there. She has grown up plain, and looks much more than five years older than me. They were n't in evening dress, or even tea-gowns like in England — it did seem strange.

Mme. de Croixmare looks a dragon! I can't think how poor papa insisted upon my having such a godmother. Her face is quite white, and her hair so black and drawn off her forehead, and she has a bristly moustache. She is also very upright and thin, and walks with an ebony

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stick, and her voice is like a peacock's. She looked me through and through, and I felt all my French getting jumbled, and it came out with such an English accent; and after we had bowed a good deal, and said heaps of Ollendorfish kind of sentences, I was given some "sirop" and water, and conducted to bed by Victorine. She is a big dump with a shiny complexion, and such a very small mouth, and I am sure I shall hate her, she is n't a bit good-natured-looking like Jean. The house is really fine Louis XV., and my bedroom and cabinet de toilette are delicious, so is my bed; but the attitude of Agnès — such a conscious pride in the superiority of France — nearly drove me mad. *A Formidable Godmother*

There is n't a decent dressing-table mirror, only one in an old silver frame about eight inches square, and that is sitting on the writing-table — or what would be the writing-table, if there happened to be any pens and things, which there are n't. All the hanging places open out of the panels of the wall, there are no wardrobes, only beautiful marble-topped *bureaux;* but I was so tired

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A French Family at Home

I left Agnès to settle everything and jumped into bed. This morning I woke early, and had the loveliest cup of chocolate, but such a silly bath, and almost cold water. There are no housemaids, and nothing is done with precise regularity like at home, although they are so rich. Agnès had to fish for everything of that sort herself, and such a lot of talking went on in the passage between her and the *valet de chambre*, before I even got this teeny tiny tray to splash in. However, I did get dressed at last, and went for a walk in the garden — not a soul about but a few gardeners. The begonias are magnificent, but there is no look of park beyond the garden, or nice deer and things that we would have for such a house in England. It is more like a sort of big villa.

I saw Jean at last in the distance, going round and round a large pond on his bicycle. He did look odd! in a thick striped jersey, and the tightest knicker-bockers; almost as low as a "scorcher." He jumped off and made a most polite bow, and explained he was doing it for

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exercise. But I do think that an idiotic reason — don't you, Mamma? It would be just as much exercise on a road. However, he assured me that, like that, he knew exactly how many miles he went on the flat before breakfast, so I suppose it was all right. *A French Family at Home*

I saw he wanted to continue his ride, so I walked on, and presently came to a summer-house, where Victorine and the *dame de compagnie* were doing their morning reading. There were also the two little girls building castles out of a heap of sand, and with them the most hideous German maid you ever saw. They are queer-looking little monkeys, Yolande is like Jean, but Marie — there are three years between them — is as black as ink — but where was I? Oh, yes! — well, by this time I was so hungry I could have eaten them, German *bonne* and all! Fortunately Godmamma turned up, and we strolled back to *déjeûner*. Héloise was in the salon, and she is charming, such a contrast to the rest of the party. She was beautifully dressed and so *chic*.

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A French Family at Home

We took to each other at once, she has not picked up that solid married look like Jean, so perhaps it is only the husbands who get it in France.

There was a good deal of ceremony going in to breakfast. Jean gave his mother his arm, and we trotted behind. The dining-room is a perfect room, except there is no carpet, and the food was lovely, only I do hate to see a great hand covered with a white cotton glove, plopping a dish down on the lighted thing in the middle, so that one has to look at the next course all the time one is finishing the last one. The way in which the two little monkeys and the German maid devoured their breakfast quite took one's appetite away. There seemed to be numbers of men-servants, who wore white cotton gloves, and their liveries buttoned up to the throat, which takes away that nice clean-shirt-look of our servants at home.

This afternoon we are going to pay a visit of ceremony to the Comte and Comtesse de Tournelle; we are going

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with them on their yacht down the Seine to-morrow. It is Jean and Héloise who have arranged to take me — it is kind of them, and it will be fun; and I am glad it is not considered proper for young French girls to go without their mothers, because we shall get rid of Victorine, and the voyage will be more agreeable. Agnès and the other maids and valets are going by train, and will meet us with the luggage at the different places we stop at each night, as the *Sauterelle* is too small to carry everything. I must go and get ready now, so good-bye, dear Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

French Servants

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YACHT *Sauterelle*,
17th August.

Yacht "Sauterelle"

DEAREST MAMMA,—I am writing as we float down the Seine, it is too enchanting. We are a party of ten. The Comte and Comtesse de Tournelle; her mother, the Baronne de Larnac, and her uncle, the Baron de Frémond, Jean, Héloise, and me; the Marquise de Vermondoise, and two young men, officers in the Cavalry, stationed at Versailles. One is the Vicomte Gaston de la Trémors, and the other's name is so long that I can't get it, so you must know him by "Antoine"—he is some sort of a relation of Héloise's. The Baronne is a delightful person, the remains of extreme good looks and distinction. She was a beauty under the Empire, and her feet are so small, she is just as *soignée* as if she was young, and so vain and human. She lives with her daughter while they are in the country—it seems the custom here, these huge family parties living together all the summer. The young people have their *appartement* in the Champs Elysées in Paris,

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and the old ones go to the family hotel in the *Faubourg St. Germain.* We *did* say a lot of polite things when we went to pay our visit yesterday, and although they know one another so well — as it was a "visit of ceremony" to introduce me — we all had our best clothes on, and sat in the large salon — (there are four Louis XVI. arm chairs, sticking out each side of the fireplaces, in all the salons here). Héloise and the Comtesse de Tournelle are great friends. The Comte de Tournelle is charming, he is like the people in the last century Memoirs, he ought to have powdered hair, and his manners have a distinction and a wit quite unlike anything in England. One can see he is descended from people who had their heads cut off for being aristocrats. Jean says he does not belong to *le Sporting*, and is fearfully effeminate. He can't even put on his own socks without his valet, and he never rides or bicycles or anything, but just does a little motor-carring, and fights a few duels.

A Visit of Ceremony

The Comtesse de Tournelle is small

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A Visit of Ceremony

and young and rather dull; she reads a great deal. The old boy, the Baron de Frémond (he owns the *Sauterelle*) is a jolly old soul, and chaffs his sister and niece, and every one, all the time, and thinks it so funny to talk fearful English. The two young men have n't looked at me much. They are in uniform! and they put their heels together and bowed deeply when they were introduced, but we have n't spoken yet. The Marquise de Vermondoise is perfectly lovely, so fascinating, with such a queer deep voice, and one tooth at the side of the front missing; and her tongue keeps getting in there when she speaks, which gives her a kind of lisp, and it is awfully attractive. I think de Tournelle would like to kiss her, by the way he looked at her when she thanked him for handing her on board.

It is a steam yacht with a wee cabin, and a deck above that, with seats looking out each side, like old omnibuses, and in the stern (if that means the back part) are the sailors and the engines, and the oddest arrangement of cooking appa-

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ratus. You should just taste the exquisite breakfasts that Hippolyte (the Baronne de Larnac's *maître d'hôtel*) cooked for us this morning after we started. He is the queerest creature, with a face like a baboon, and side whiskers, and the rest a deep blue from shaving. The Baronne says she could not live without him; he is a splendid cook, and a perfect *femme de chambre*, and ready for anything. He is much more familiar than we should ever let a servant be in England. It was rough all the morning, quite waves. The Seine is only half a mile from the Château de Croixmare, and runs past the Tournelles' garden, so they have a private landing stage, and we all embarked from there. Jean and the Comte are dressed in beautiful English blue serges, and look neat enough to be under a glass case. The old Baron does not care what he wears, and this morning while he was working with the sailors had on a black Sunday coat!

The Invaluable Hippolyte

The Baronne kept screaming when the boat rocked a little. "Nous ferons nau-

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The Invaluable Hippolyte

frage! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!" and the Vicomte tried to comfort her, but she did not stop till Hippolyte popped his head out of the cabin and said, "Pas de danger! et il ne faut pas que Mme. la Baronne fasse la Bebête!"

At *déjeûner* we had only one plate each, and one knife and fork. It was so windy we could not have it under the awning in the bows, and the cabin is so narrow that the seats are against the wall, and the table in the middle. No one can pass to wait, so between the courses we washed our plates in the Seine, out of the window. It *was* gay! They are all so witty, but it is not considered correct to talk just to one's neighbour, a conversation *à deux*. Everything must be general, so it is a continual sharpening of wits, and one has to shout a good deal, as otherwise, with every one talking at once, one would not be heard. I know French pretty well as you know, but they say a lot of strange things I can't understand, and whenever I answer or ask why, they go into fits of laughter and say, "Est elle gentille l'enfant! hein!"

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The Invaluable Hippolyte

We are going to stop at the next small village to post the letters, so good-bye, dear Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P.S. — I hope you won't get muddled, Mamma, with all their names, it takes so long writing the whole thing, so please remember Mme. de Larnac is the "Baronne," Monsieur de Frémond is the "Baron," Monsieur de Tournelle is the "Comte," Mme. de Tournelle is the "Comtesse," Mme. de Vermondoise is the "Marquise," Monsieur de la Trémors is the "Vicomte," and "Antoine" is the other officer. So if I have n't always time to put their names you will know now which they are.

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VERNON, YACHT *Sauterelle*,
Thursday morning.

Vernon DEAREST MAMMA,—The scenery we came through yesterday is quite beautiful, but I did not pay so much attention to it as I might have done, because Jean and the Comte would talk to me. You would be amused at Vernon, where we stayed the night in *such* an inn! I believe it is the only one in the place, and as old as the hills. You get at the bedrooms from an open gallery that runs round the court-yard, and that smells of garlic and stables. We got here about six, and started *en masse* to inspect the rooms. Hippolyte had engaged them beforehand, and seemed rather apologetic about them, and finally, when there did not appear half enough to go round, he shrugged his shoulders almost up to his ears and said, "Que voulez vous!" and that "Ces Messieurs" would have to be "très bourgeois en voyage," and that there was nothing for it but that Mme. la Comtesse de Tournelle should "partager l'appartement de Monsieur le Comte de

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Tournelle," and that Monsieur le Comte de Croixmare would have to extend like hospitality to Mme. la Comtesse de Croixmare. This caused shrieks of derision. Héloise said she would prefer to sleep on the dining-room table, and "Antoine" said he thought people ought to be a little more careful of their reputations even *en voyage*. Finally they unearthed a baby's cot in the room that Hippolyte had designed for the Croixmare menage, and de Tournelle said it was the very thing for me, but Jean replied, "Mon cher ami c'est une Bébé beaucoup trop emoustillante," which I thought very rude, just as if I snored, or something dreadful like that. Then, after a further prowl, a fearful little hole was discovered beyond, with no curtains to the windows, or blinds, or shutters, just a scrap of net. The face of Agnès when she saw it!

A Necessary Precaution

Dinner was not until seven, so Jean and I went out for a walk; as Hippolyte advised us to try and find a chemist and buy some flea powder. "Je trouverai ça plus prudent," he said. Jean is getting quite natural

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A Necessary Precaution

with me now, and is n't so awfully polite. The chemist took us for a honeymoon couple (as, of course, if I had been French I could not have gone for a walk with Jean alone). He — the chemist — was so sympathetic, he had only one packet of powder left, he said, as so much was required by the *voyageurs* and inhabitants that he was out of it (that did not sound a pleasant prospect for our night) — "Mais, madame" (that's me), "n'est pas assez grasse pour les attirer," he added by way of consolation.

It was spitting with rain when we got back, and they all made such a fuss for fear I had got wet, and they would not for worlds stir out of doors to see the church or anything, which I heard is very picturesque. We had such an amusing dinner, the food was wonderful, considering the place, but a *horrible* cloth and pewter forks and spoons. There were two *officiers* at another table (only infantry), and they were *so* interested in our party.

"Antoine" sat next to me, and in a pause in the general conversation he said to me

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(it is the first time he has addressed me directly), "Il fait mauvais temps, mademoiselle." I have heard him saying all kinds of *drôle* things to the others, so it shows he can be quite intelligent. It is just because I am not married I suppose, so I said that is what English people always spoke about — the weather — and I wanted to hear something different in France. He seemed perfectly shocked, and hardly spoke to me after that, but the Vicomte, who was listening, began at once to say flattering things across the table. They all make compliments upon my French, and are very gay and kind, but I wish they did not eat so badly. The Comte and the Marquise, who are cousins, and of the very oldest noblesse, are the worst — one dare n't look sometimes. The Comtesse is a little better, but then her family is only Empire, and Jean and Héloise are fairly decent. *Close Quarters*

I could bear most of it, if it was n't for the peppermint glasses at the end, which the men have. The whole party are very French, not a bit like the people we see at Cannes, who have been much with the

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Close Quarters

English. It is a different thing altogether. When dinner was over the rain stopped, and after a lot of talk — as to whether the ground would be too damp or not — we at last ventured for a walk down to the bridge and back. Then we returned and commenced a general powdering of the beds, beginning with the de Tournelles' apartment; next we went to the Marquise's — she had such an exquisite nightgown laid out, it was made of pink chiffon. When we got to my room they made all kinds of sympathies for me having such a small and stuffy place. The powder was all gone before we could sprinkle the Baronne's bed. Agnès was not quite so uppish undressing me as usual. Perhaps she realised this part of her France was not so good as England.

Next morning when I got down — we had arranged to have our *premier déjeûner* all together, not in our rooms, as we were to make such an early start — "Antoine" and Héloise were already there. The Vicomte and the Baronne came in soon after; he at once began: "Comme Mlle.

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est ravissante le soir! un petit ange à son déshabillé! Une si éblouissante chevelure!" *A Conjugal Experiment*

The wretch had been watching me from the opposite gallery, was n't it *odious* of him, Mamma? No Englishman would have done such a thing. I *was* angry, but Héloise said it was no use, that I must get accustomed to "les habitudes de voyage," and that she did not suppose he had really looked, it was only to tease me. *But I believe he had* — anyway from that moment de la Trémors has been always talking to me. Presently while we were eating our rolls, the garçon, a Parisian (who was also the ostler), came in and said: Would Madame — indicating the Baronne — come up to "Mademoiselle," who wished to speak to her? We could not think who he could mean, as I was the only "Mademoiselle" of the party. The Baronne told him so. "Mais non!" he said, jerking his thumb in the direction of upstairs, "La demoiselle dans la chambre de Monsieur."

"Mais que dites vous mon brave homme!"

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A Conjugal Experiment

screamed the Baronne and Héloise together. The man was quite annoyed.

"Je dis ce que je dis et je m'en fiche pas mal! la petite demoiselle blonde, dans la chambre de Monsieur le Comte de Tournelle."

At that moment the Comtesse came in, so with another jerk of his thumb at her, "Comment! vous ne me croyez pas?" he said, "tiens — la voilà!" and he bounced out of the room.

"Antoine" said it served them perfectly right, that he had warned them their reputations would suffer if husbands and wives camped together. Even a place like Vernon, he said, was sufficiently enlightened to find the situation impossible.

I don't know what it all meant, but the Comtesse de Tournelle is now called "la demoiselle!"

The two young men leave us for the day, to do their duty at Versailles, but are to meet us again at Rouen in the evening, with leave for a few days. We are just going on board, so I will finish this presently.

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A Conjugal Experiment

5 *p.m.* —The scenery is too beautiful after you pass Vernon, and it was so interesting getting in and out of the locks. The Baronne and I and Jean talked together on the raised deck, while de Tournelle read to the Marquise in the bows. The old Baron is mostly with the sailors, and Héloise slept a good deal. Every now and then Hippolyte came out from his cooking place, and one saw his baboon face appearing on a level with the deck floor, and he would explain all the places we passed, and it always ended with: "Il ne faut pas que Mme. La Baronne pionce c'est très très intéressant."

I can't tell you what a *drôle* creature he is. Héloise woke up presently and talked to me; she said if it was not for the Tournelles she could not stand the Château de Croixmare and Victorine. It appears too, that when in Paris, Godmamma always drives in the Bois at the wrong times, and will have her opera box on the nights no one is there, and that irritates Héloise.

I can't think why papa and she were such friends. I don't believe if he had

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A Conjugal Experiment

been alive now, and accustomed to really nice people like you and me, he would have been able to put up with her.

I shall post this directly we land, I am writing on the cabin table, and now good-bye. — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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CAUDEBEC,
Saturday, 20th August.

A Visit to Rouen

DEAREST MAMMA, — To-day has been the loveliest I ever remember, not a cloud in the sky. We landed at Rouen the day before yesterday about six, and the hotel we stopped at was quite decent, and although the windows of my room looked upon the inner courtyard they at least had shutters. I wanted to go and see the marks the flames of Joan of Arc's burning had made on the wall, but every one was so hungry, we had to have dinner so early, there was n't time. *Canard à la Rouennaise is* good, it is done here with a wine called *Grenache.* I had two helpings, and just as we were finishing, the Vicomte and "Antoine" came in from the station. They are n't in uniform now, but their hair does stick up so, and somehow their clothes don't look comfortable. I liked them in uniform best. Madame de Vermandoise talked to "Antoine" across the table quite a lot. That is the only way one may speak directly to a person, it seems. After dinner we went in

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A Visit to Rouen

search of some place of amusement, but there was no theatre open, so we had to content ourselves with a walk along the quay, and then we came back and drank *sirop*. It *is* sweet and nice, and you can have it raspberry, or gooseberry, or what you like, and I am sure if the people in England who drink nasty old ports and things could have it they would like it much better. The Baronne calls all the men by their end names like "Tournelle," "Croixmare," "Trémors," &c., and every one is very devoted to her, and I daresay she is even older than you, mamma; is n't it wonderful? Jean now always sits beside me, I suppose he thinks he is my host, but I would rather have the Vicomte de la Trémors, who is very amusing. But to go back to Rouen. It was a treat to sleep fearlessly in a clean bed after Vernon, and I actually had a bath in the morning. I don't know where Agnès retrieved it from.

You can see Joan of Arc's flames quite plain, we went there as soon as we were dressed. "Antoine" would insist it was only the black from a smoky chimney, but

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I paid no attention to him. The *Horloge* is nice, and we did a lot of churches, but they always look to me just the same, and any way they all smell alike, and I don't think I shall bother with any more. We had breakfast on the *Sauterelle*, but it was so fine after we left Vernon, and yesterday, that we could have it each day in the bows under the awning, and so had not to wash our forks and plates. The Châteaux are so picturesque, and such woods! after you leave Rouen. Héloise did not sleep yesterday. "Antoine" talked so much, no one could really have had a comfortable nap. In the afternoon the Marquise told us our fortunes; she said Héloise would marry twice, which made her look as pleased as Punch, but Jean did not think it at all funny, though every one else laughed. She told me I should probably be an old maid ("*Coiffer St. Catherine*"), and so I said in that case I should run pins into the horrid old saint's head: I simply *won't* be an old maid, Mamma, so they need not make any more predictions. However, it would be worse to be one here than at

"*Coiffer St. Catherine*"

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"*Coiffer St. Catherine*"

home, because even up to forty, if you are n't married, you may n't go to the nice theatres, or talk to people alone, or even speak much more than "Yes" and "No," and you generally get a nasty moustache or something. We saw a whole family of elderly girls at our hotel at Rouen, and they all had moustaches or moles on the cheek.

We got here (Caudebec) yesterday soon after four. Our inn looks right on to the Seine, and is as old nearly as the one at Vernon, but fortunately beautifully clean. Only you have to get at your room through somebody else's. Mine is beyond the Baronne's and Madame de Vermandoise gets at hers through the Comtesse de Tournelle's. Hers is the most ridiculous place, with a red curtain hanging across so that sometimes it can be turned into two; and such a thing happened last night. "Antoine" went in with the Comte de Tournelle to help him to shut the window, as Madame de Tournelle could n't, when a gust of wind blew the door shut, and whether there was a spring lock or not I don't know, but

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any way nothing would induce it to open again. So there they were. We had stayed up rather late; the landlord and the servants were in bed. They rattled and shook and pushed, but to no purpose. *A Misadventure*

There was only a board partition between my room and Madame de Vermandoise's, so I could hear everything, and Tournelle said there was nothing for it but that "Antoine" would have to sleep in the other bed in her room. She screamed a great deal, and they all laughed very much, and all talked at once, so I suppose that was why I could not understand quite everything they were saying. At last the Baronne rushed into my room to discover what the noise was. She looks perfectly *odd* when going to bed; a good deal seemed to have come off; she is as thin as a lath; and on the dressing table was such a sweet lace nightcap, with lovely baby curls sewed to its edge, and when she put that on she did look sweet. It is n't that she has no hair herself, it 's thick and brown; but she explained that having to wear a nightcap because of earache, she found it more becoming with the

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A Misadventure

curls. I suppose it is on account of the waiters coming in with the breakfast that they have to be so particular in France how they look in bed.

But to go on about the door. We sent the Baronne's maid and Agnès to try and find the landlord; but, after exploring untold depths below and above, they only succeeded in unearthing Hippolyte. He came up from his bed looking just like that very clever Missing Link that was at Barnum's, do you remember? — the one that sometimes was an Irishwoman, and could do housework in a cage by itself. I don't know exactly what Hippolyte had on, but it ended up with a petticoat of red and black plaid, and a pair of grey linen trousers over his shoulders; his whiskers and hair were standing straight on end, and his shaved bits were bluer than ever at night. He said a good deal of the French equivalent of, "Here's a pretty kettle of fish," and shrugged so that I was afraid the petticoat would slip off; and finally, when all the pushing and pulling had no effect on the door, he said

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people must resign themselves to the accidents of travel, and as there were four beds, he did not see that they had too much to complain of. *"Not Much to Complain of"*

At this moment Héloise came out of her room to see what the commotion was. She understood it was her husband locked in the room, and she laughed too very much, and said they must just stay there; but when she heard the voice of "Antoine" she seemed to think the situation grave — I suppose because he is not married — and she also did everything she could to open the door. Of course if they had been Englishmen they would have simply kicked it down, and got out without more ado, but the French are n't strong enough for that.

Héloise became quite disagreeable about it, though as it was n't Jean I can't think what business it was of hers. She said it was because "Antoine" did not really try, and she was sure he had done it on purpose, upon which Madame de Vermandoise gurgled with mirth. I could hear both sides you see, because of the wooden par-

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"Not Much to Complain of"

tition. "Antoine" came into the inner room and said he was "Doux comme un petit agneau," but the Marquise said that he was "Un loup dans une peau de mouton," and must go away. Finally the whole of the rest of the party in different stages of *déshabillé* got collected outside the door. No landlord was to be found anywhere. Then the old Baron suggested quite a simple plan, which was for Madame de Tournelle to share Madame de Vermandoise's room, and to leave the Comte and "Antoine" in her room.

No one seemed to have thought of this before; and that is what they finally did, and at last we got to sleep. In the morning no landlord could still be found, and we had no coffee, but presently he arrived accompanied by two *gendarmes* and goodness knows what other rabble armed with sticks, and they wanted to proceed upstairs. We heard every sort of "*Sacrés!*" going on between them and Hippolyte, and eventually the landlord almost crawled up apologising, and opened the door with his key.

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A Cautious Landlord

It appears that hearing the noise of the door being tried to be opened and Madame de Vermandoise's screams, he had thought it wiser to decamp for the night, as two years ago there had been a murder there, and he had had "beaucoup d'embêtement," he said, on account of it, and was determined not to be mixed up in one again, "En ces affaires là, il est bien assez tôt d'arriver le lendemain," he said.

Everybody was still laughing too much over the situation to be angry with him; and the coffee, which we got at last, was so good it made up for it; but you should have heard the *plaisanteries* they made over the night's adventure!

Caudebec is an odd place; it used to be inhabited by hundreds of Protestant beaver hat-makers, who fled from there after the Edict of Nantes' affair, and so there are streets of deserted houses still, and so old, one has a stream down the middle. I would not go into the church: the usual smell met me at the door; so the Vicomte and Jean and I went for a walk, and now we are just going to

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A Cautious Landlord

start on the *Sauterelle* again, and this must be posted. I have managed to write it on my knee, sitting on a stone bench outside the inn door. — Good-bye, dear Mamma, with love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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HOTEL FRASCATI, HAVRE,
Sunday, 21st August.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I am sorry our nice voyage is nearly finished, for we go over to Trouville this evening, and from there by train back to Vinant. The river is not nearly so pretty after you leave Caudebec, but Tancarville is fine, and looks very imposing sitting up so high. The Vicomte has been talking to me all the time, but Jean stays by. We were dusty and sunburnt by the time we got to Havre, and Héloise and the Marquise and I started at once for the big baths. They do not quite join the hotel, so we covered a good deal of absence, in the way of dress, by our faithful mackintoshes and trotted across. On the steps we met de Tournelle just coming out from the baths; he laughed when he saw us, and said he had never before realised that garments of so much respectability could have such possibilities! Oh! how nice to have a real bath again!

Havre to Trouville

Agnès has n't enjoyed this trip much, I can see. Heaven knows where she has

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A Gay Dinner

slept! I thought it wiser not to ask. We had such a gay dinner. I am getting accustomed to shouting across the table at every one; it will feel quite queer just talking to one's neighbour when I get back to England. The restaurant at Frascati is n't at all bad, and it was agreeable to have proper food again.

Hippolyte thinks we are awfully greedy; he was heard yesterday grumbling to the Baronne's maid, "Mais où diable est-ce que ces dames mettent tout ce qu'elles mangent? Elles goblottent toute la journée!"

After dinner we drank our coffee on the terrace and listened to the band. Héloise would hardly speak to "Antoine" all day, and he looked perfectly miserable, and Madame de Vermandoise every now and then laughed to herself — I don't know what at. However we took a walk on the pier presently, and as there was such a crowd we were n't able to walk all together as usual, but had to go two and two. "Antoine" walked with Héloise, and I suppose they made it up. I just caught this: "N'oubliez jamais, bien chère Madame,

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qu'une église a deux portes." Héloise said she would not forget, and he thanked her rapturously; but what it meant I don't know. They have both smiled often since, so I expect it is some French idiom for reconciliation. *A Gay Dinner*

The crowd on the pier was common, and we returned to Frascati's garden. It was so fearfully hot, that beyond wondering if the dew was falling, no one suggested we should get cold, as they always do. It really has been a delightful trip, and I have enjoyed it so. They are all charming. They seem to have kinder hearts than some of the people at Nazeby, but what strikes one as quite different is that every one is witty; they are making epigrams or clever *tournures de phrases* all the time, and don't seem to talk of the teeny weeny things we do in England. They have most exquisite manners, and extraordinarily unpleasant personal habits, like eating, and coughing, and picking their teeth, etc.; but they do have nice under-clothes, and lovely soaps and scents and things.

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Views for Victorine The Frascati beds were comfortable, and I could not wake in the morning, in spite of Agnès fussing about. The Vicomte has awakened every one each day by rapping at their doors, but this morning I was at last aroused by Héloise, who had the next room, and we had our coffee together. She says she does hope soon to get Victorine married, and that they have a nephew of the Baronne's in view, but he has not seen her yet. It appears it is easier to get them off if they are quiet looking and dowdy, but not so aggressive as Victorine. You have n't much chance if you are very pretty and lively; as she says, the men only like you to be that when you are married to some one else. Héloise wishes to have everything smart as the Tournelles have, but Godmamma and Victorine are always against her. She says life there is for ever eating *galette de plomp*, which I suppose means a suet pudding feeling. We all went to High Mass at eleven; it was very pretty, and such a good-looking priest handed the bag. I should hate to be a priest; should n't you,

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Mamma? You may n't even look at any one nice. *Views for Victorine*

We breakfasted at Frascati, but we were a little bit gloomy at our trip being over. This afternoon they have nearly all gone for a drive in hired motor cars, but I have n't a hat here that would stay on, so I am writing to you instead, and we cross over to Trouville at five o'clock in the ordinary boat, as it is too rough for the *Sauterelle*. — Good-bye, dear Mamma, your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P. S. — I forgot to tell you the story of the "*Côte des deux Amants.*" You know the fearfully straight, steep hill we have often noticed from the train if you go to Paris from Dieppe. Well, Hippolyte told us the story when we passed it. It is quite close from the river, and looks as if it had been cut with a knife, it is so steep. It appears that in the Middle Ages there was a castle on the top, and there lived a Comte who had a tremendously stout daughter. He said no one should have her and her

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A Full-blown Bride

fortune unless he was strong enough to carry her from the bottom to the top of the hill. Hundreds tried — it was a beauty then to be fat — but every one dropped her half-way, and the poor thing got "très fatiguée d'être plantée comme ça," when a handsome cavalier came along, and he succeeded. His snorts of out-of-breathness could be heard for miles, but he got her to the top and then fell dead at her feet; and she went into a convent and died. Hippolyte said also that the other ending of the story was, that she got so thin from pining for the knight that the next one who came along had no difficulty, and so they married and lived happy ever after. But I like the tragic end best. And he said that the peasants still declare they can hear the knight wheezing on moonlight nights, but "Antoine" said it was probably a traction engine. And I don't think it nice of him; do you, Mamma?

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CHATEÂU DE CROIXMARE,
24th August.

Modest Maidens

DEAREST MAMMA, — I am quite sure I shall never be able to stand the whole fortnight more here. We got back on Monday evening, and Godmamma was as disagreeable as could be. She said all sorts of spiteful things about the Tournelles, and especially the Baronne; and Jean looked nervous and uncomfortable, and Héloise like a mule; and Victorine said I had no doubt enjoyed myself, but for her part she would be sorry to be taken for a "young married woman," which was what Madame de Visac (a woman who came to call after we left) had said — "Qui est cette jeune femme avec votre belle sœur?"

She had seen us embarking. So I said I was flattered, as that seemed to mean in France all that was attractive in contrast to the girls. Did you ever hear of such a *cat*, Mamma? and considering that I am only seventeen, and she is an old maid of twenty-two; I think it too ridiculous. She need not fear, no one would ever think she

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Modest Maidens

was married, she looks like a lumping German governess. Two of her girl friends came to breakfast yesterday, of course with their mothers, and you should have heard the idiot conversation we had! All plopped down on the great sofa in the big salon, like a row of dolls. The two friends were simply gasping with excitement at the idea of my having gone on the *Sauterelle*. They asked me endless questions, and giggled, and I *did* tell them some things!

They asked also about England, and was it really true that when we went to a ball we stayed with our *danseurs* till the next dance? I said I had not been to a ball yet, but had always heard that is what one did. One of the friends is quite nice-looking, but with such dirty nails. It appears you don't wash much till you are married, it is not considered *bien vu*, in fact rather *lancé*, and you can't have fine underclothes, it has all got to be as unattractive as possible, and that shows you are as good as gold and will make a nice wife.

But it must be a bother picking up a taste for having baths and things afterwards,

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The Trouville Casino

if it is n't from instinct, don't you think so, Mamma? And I am glad I am not French. It is even eccentric if you sleep with your window open; Héloise screamed at me for that. They all assure me it gives sore eyes, besides encouraging an early grave. I said at last that in England we slept the whole summer in the open air. I was so exasperated, and they would believe anything.

Oh, I wish we were back on the *Sauterelle!* — which reminds me I have never told you anything about Trouville. The whole place was full of such beautiful ladies, and such nice clothes. They must all have been married, their things were so becoming. The Vicomte seemed to know them well, and they all spoke of them by their Christian names, such as, *Voilà Blanche d'Antin!* or *Emilie* something else, as we passed them, but none of our party bowed to the really pretty ones, which I thought very queer if they knew them well enough to speak of them by their Christian names. I remember you always told me never to do that — I mean to use

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The Trouville Casino

people's first names in speaking of them if you are not acquainted with them — but evidently it is different here. The Tournelles and all the others did stop to speak to heaps of duller looking people, and every one tried to persuade us to stay and go to the races.

We went to the Casino in the evening and saw a piece; it was boring. We had two boxes, and they kept talking to me all the time, so I really could not pay much attention to the acting.

Down below us was the Marquise de Vermandoise's brother-in-law, with a rather dowdy little woman. They talked a great deal about him, and the Marquise said it was just like his economy to go to Trouville with such "une espèce de petite fagottée bon marché." So I suppose it was some poor relation he was treating, but they seemed very good friends, as he held her hand all the time, quite forgetting the people up above could see. Then we played "Petits Chevaux," and I won every time; I do like it very much.

We came back to Vinant by the two

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o'clock train, but first we went to bathe. I was really annoyed at having to have a hired dress, a frightful thing, and weighing a ton. The Marquise and the others had brought theirs on the chance of our having time for a dip. The Baronne's and Héloise's were too sweet. The Baronne's cap had the same kind of lovely little curls round it that she wears at night; but she is a great coward, and hardly went in deeper than her ankles, in spite of all the entreaties of "Antoine" and the Vicomte. The Marquise de Vermandoise looks splendid in the water, just like a goddess, and her bathing-dress was thin enough red silk for us to see how beautifully she is made. The splashing about seemed to make her so gay, she kept putting her tongue into the gap where her tooth is gone, and looked so wicked they would all have swam anywhere after her. She and de Tournelle went out a long way to a boat, and they did seem to be having a good time. I wish I could swim like that.

A Bathing Party

Héloise and "Antoine" made *la planche* together; it is simply floating, only you

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A Bathing Party

have some one to hold you up in case you float out too far. The Vicomte wanted to teach me, and as I was getting rather tired of pretending to swim with one leg down, I tried, and it feels lovely, and we did laugh so over it. At last the Baronne came out quite up to her knees to call to us "Trémors, c'est défendu de faire des bêtises." I suppose she thought he would let me drown.

Jean and the Comtesse de Tournelle watched us from the *plage*. The old Baron swims splendidly, and went quite out of sight. Hippolyte was waiting among the other servants with our *peignoirs*, and presently he clapped his hands to insure attention, and shouted, "Il ne faut pas que Madame la Baronne reste trop longtemps se mouillant les pieds, elle prendrait froid, mieux vaut sortir de l'eau!"

I am glad my hair curls naturally, because I laughed so at the face of Hippolyte, gesticulating at the Baronne, that I did not pay attention to a wave, and it threw me over, and I went right under water. The Vicomte pulled me up, but there was

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no need of him to have been so long about it, and I told him so. He apologised, and said it was his fear that I should drown, but we were only up to our chests in water, so I don't believe it a bit. After that we came out, and it is just as well one has a *peignoir* to put on immediately, as the bathing gowns are so tight and thin, when wet they look quite odd. There were hundreds of other people bathing too, and some of the dresses were so pretty. One was all black and very tight, with red dragons running over it, and she had a gold bangle on her ankle. I wish we could have stayed longer, it was so gay. *End of the Trip*

In the train coming back we played all sorts of games. Jean and the old Baron went "smoking," and we eight squashed into the same carriage, so as not to be separated. We had to go right up to Paris (as the express does not stop at Vinant), and then back again. One can just see the high roof of Croixmare from the train. Yesterday those tiresome girls came to *déjeûner*, and to-day we go to pay another visit of ceremony at the Tournelles',

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End of the Trip

to thank them for our nice trip. I shall be glad to see them again after looking at Godmamma for two whole days.

The evenings are awful. Although it is so warm no one thinks of walking in the garden, or even sitting out on the *perron*. When we come out from dinner, though it is broad daylight, every shutter is shut and curtains drawn, and there we sit in the salon, all arranged round in a semi-circle, and make conversation, and *sirop* comes at nine, and, thank goodness, we get off to bed at ten! But even if you wanted to talk nicely to the person sitting by you you could n't, because every one would at once stop what they were saying and listen. There is going to be an entertainment at the Tournelles' in about a week, a kind of *fête champêtre*. We are to dine in a pavilion in the garden, and then have a *cotillon*.—Good-bye, dear Mamma, with love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
25th August.

Croixmare again

DEAREST MAMMA, — The longer I stay here the more glad I am that I am not French! Victorine is going to be shown to her future *fiancé* to-day, but I must first tell you how it came about. We went to Château de Tournelle yesterday to pay our visit, Godmamma, Victorine, and I in the victoria, and Jean and Héloise in the phaeton. They were in the garden playing tennis with a party of friends from Versailles, and among them, of course, the Vicomte and "Antoine." They were all so glad to see me, and the Baronne called me her "*chère petite*," and kissed me on both cheeks, as if we had been parted for months. The Vicomte—when he had done putting his heels together and bowing to Victorine and me, and kissing Héloise's and Godmamma's hands — managed to get in, in a lower voice, that his ride from Versailles now seemed to him to have been very short. Upon which Victorine at once said, "*Comment?*" with the expression

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An Untruthful Frenchman

of a terrier whose ears are suddenly cocked up on the alert. He bowed more deeply than ever, and said that he was saying it was a long ride from Versailles! So you see that Frenchmen are not truthful, Mamma! Well — then we were sent to look at the gardens, accompanied by Jean and the Curé.

The Comtesse "adores" *le tennis*, and plays very well, it quite animates her. The Baronne plays too, but she does n't hit the ball much, and screams most of the time; she was in the middle of a game when we arrived, and only stopped to pay all kinds of civilities to our party. Her pretty feet show when she runs about, but she wears a large black tulle hat with fluffy strings, and it does not seem very suitable for tennis. I had to walk with the old Curé when the path was not wide enough to trot all together. The gardens really are lovely, with all kinds of strange shrubs and trees, and *fontaines* and *bosquets*, and nooks, but I don't see the least use in them if one has always to walk three in a row, if not more, do you, Mamma? The Curé was a charming old fellow, and ex-

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plained all the plants to me. We had no sooner got back to the tennis ground than one felt something momentous was taking place between Godmamma and the Baronne. She had finished her tennis, and they were sitting away from the others, nodding their heads together. Victorine at once put on a conscious air, and minced more than usual. "Antoine" and Héloise seemed speaking seriously, while she examined his new racket. The Vicomte had begun a game, so could not talk to us, but some more officers were introduced, and, after the usual bowing, we began to talk.

An Untruthful Frenchman

"Vous aimez le tennis, mademoiselle?"

"Oui, monsieur," from Victorine. "Moi, je le déteste," from me.

"Pas possible!" from every one.

"Je vous assure on ne joue que le croquet chez nous."

"Le croquet," from Victorine, "un jeu de Couvent!"

"Le croquet! Et les anglais qui n'aiment que l'exercice!" from the officers, &c., &c.

Very interesting, you see, one's conversations here!

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A Marriage Arranged

All this time the Baronne and Godmamma were nodding their heads, and when Jean and Héloise joined them, they looked like those sets of mandarins that used to be on Uncle Charles's mantelpiece, and as we said Good-bye, the Baronne said to Godmamma, " Bien, chère madame, c'est entendu alors c'est pour demain."

All the way home in the carriage, Victorine simpered. I felt I could have slapped her.

In the evening there was an air of mystery about them all, and, quite unlike her usual custom, Héloise came into my room to chat when I was going to bed. Of course Agnès stayed as long as she could, but no sooner had we got rid of her, than Héloise told me what it was all about. It appears the Baronne has a nephew, who has made a heap of debts ; he is a Marquis, and he wants to " redorer le blason." It is necessary for him to secure a large dot, but he is " si terriblement volage," that the extreme plainness of Victorine may put him off. The Baronne has been arranging it, and he is to be brought with his parent to breakfast, to sample her!

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A Marriage Arranged

They have not seen one another yet, and it has been difficult to get him to face the situation seriously. Victorine has been dragging on so, that the family will be delighted to let her go, even to a less fortune than she has. "Ils devraient être joliment contents, un gros paquet comme ça!" as Hippolyte, who knows every one's business, said to the Baronne's maid — Héloise told me — and that explains it; she said it would be such a *mercy* if he will settle the affair at once. She had come to ask me a favour. I did wonder what it was! And you will laugh, Mamma, when you hear! Victorine is sure to be nervous, Héloise said, and in that case her face gets red, and it would be a pity to distract his attention in any way, and in short would I mind putting on my most unbecoming dress, and not speaking while the Marquis is here?

So here I am, Mamma, writing to you up in my room, dressed in that horrid *beige* linen that we chose at night, and I shan't go down till *déjeûner* is ready, pouf! I can hear a carriage coming, I must go to the window.

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The Fiancé Appears

Yes, it is the *fiancé*, accompanied by his mother and aunt. He is nice-looking, except that he has got a silly fair beard. I can hear them arriving in the hall; such a lot of talking!

Héloise and Victorine have just been here. Héloise even has got an ugly dress on, and Victorine has scrubbed her face with soap — I suppose to get that greasy look off — until it shines like an apple, her nose is crimson, and her eyes look like two beads. They have gone downstairs. More talking — I am sure he is putting his heels together. I 'll finish this after they have gone, so as to tell you what happens.

Evening. — Such a day! After I had heard mumbling talking for quite a while — the windows were all open, and the salon is under me — suddenly the piano began. Victorine plays really well generally — that is, she has brilliant execution — but you should have heard the jumble! hardly a note right, and in the middle of it up rushed Héloise to me and sank into a chair. It was going as badly as it possibly could, she said. Victorine was so nervous that her voice was like a file,

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and her face so crimson that the Marquis must think she has erysipelas! And then, to complete matters, when she is told by Godmamma to show her accomplishments, to think that she should play like this! Especially as the Marquis is very musical! Héloise said she could see he was quite "*dégoûté*," and the only thing for it now, was for me to change my frock instantly, and to put on a becoming one, and to go down and talk. Then he would go away having enjoyed his visit, he won't reason why, and will come again; and then when I am gone, he can be pushed into the marriage with Victorine! *The Fiancé Appears*

She rang for Agnès while she spoke, and I was simply pitched into the blue *batiste*, and hustled downstairs.

Such a scene in the salon! The Baronne seated on the large sofa with Jean; Godmamma and the mother of the young man in two of the armchairs; while Victorine fumbled with some music on the piano with the *dame de compagnie*, whom Héloise calls "*le Remorqueur*," because she looks like a teeny tug pulling along a coal barge

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Wandering Glances

(Victorine). The Marquis was standing up by himself — with his hat and gloves in his hand — first on one foot, then on the other; and Marie and Yolande were making horrid, shuffling, squeaking noises, sliding on the *parquet* by the window.

When I was introduced and had made a *révérence* to the old ladies, the Marquis was presented, and when we had done bowing, he said: "Vous êtes anglaise, mademoiselle?" and, even for that, Victorine's eyes shot two yellow flames at me! Héloise nipped my arm to tell me to talk, so of course everything went out of my head, and I could only think of "Oui, monsieur." Just then breakfast was announced, and we all went in arm-in-arm, Godmamma and the Marquis together. It is a huge round table, and I had done the flowers, because they wanted to be shown how we have tables in England. I was next but one to the Marquis, with Héloise between. We had scarcely sat down, when he began. How beautiful the table looked, and what taste in the flowers! Upon which Héloise said, that they *were* lovely, and were the arrangement of her

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"*chère petite belle-sœur!*" and she smiled angelically at Victorine, who looked down with conscious pride. Then Héloise said that it was a great joy in life to have the absorbing love of flowers as Victorine had! and I could not help laughing, because Victorine does n't know one from another, and would not even help me this morning. The Marquis looked and looked at me when I laughed, and then lifting his glass of *vin ordinaire*, he said: "Les belles dents rendent gai." Was n't it nice of him? I think it is hard he should be tied to Victorine. He talked to me all the time after that, across Héloise, and considering she told me to be agreeable to him, I don't see why she should have been annoyed. *Wandering Glances*

After breakfast — which we left as usual arm-in-arm — we sat in the salon, while the Marquis and Jean went back to smoke. It was appalling! If Victorine had been a four-legged cat, she would have spit at me, but fortunately the two-legged ones can't spit in drawing-rooms, so I escaped. The Baronne, after a good deal of manœuvring, got by me near the window, and then

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A Lecture on Duty

said in a distinct voice, "Ma petite chérie j'ai trop chaud, donnez-moi votre bras un instant;" and so we got outside on the terrace, where the huge orange trees in pots stand.

As soon as we were out of earshot, she began to scold me. Why had I attracted the Marquis? how naughty of me, when it was essential his debts should be paid, etc., etc. If she had not been so nice, I should have been furious, and you can see, Mamma, how impossible to understand them it is; to be told one moment to be nice, and then, when one is, to be scolded! I just said as respectfully as I could, that I had done nothing, and that Héloise had told me to do it, and the reason why. That made the Baronne think a little. I am sure she wished for the advice of Hippolyte; but the end of it was, that she asked me how much *dot* you were going to allow me! I said I did not know, and that seemed to stump her. At last she said she supposed, as we were people of consideration, and that I was the only child, it would be something considerable. I do believe, Mamma, she was

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thinking that I might do for the Marquis! It was only a question of having his debts paid — any one who could do that would answer. It did make me *cross*, just as if I would dream of marrying into a nation that eats badly, and does n't have a bath except to be smart. Think of always having to shout across the table, day after day, and never to be able to do anything except by rules and regulations; and the stuffy rooms and the eight armchairs! I saw myself! and probably ending up with a moustache, or an *embonpoint*, or something like that. *A Lecture on Duty*

The Baronne at last patted my hand, and said: Well, well, she supposed I had not meant anything, but that I *must* leave the Marquis alone, and turn my attention to "Gaston" (the Vicomte), who was really in love with me. Then if I made him sufficiently miserable, he would be willing to fall in with another plan of hers, when I was gone, through sheer *désœuvrement*. So you see, Mamma, they look upon me as a regular catspaw, and I won't put up with it. I shall just talk to the Marquis or "Gaston" whenever I like. I was quite

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An Alternative Plan

polite to the Baronne, because she is such a dear; but I am afraid, if Godmamma had said it all, I should have been impudent.

By this time the others had joined us on the terrace. They had all been up to fix their hats on, because even if you have been out, and are running out again just after, you always have to take your hat off, and make a *toilette* for *déjeûner;* it does seem waste of time. The Baronne is considered quite eccentric because she keeps hers on sometimes. I had not even a parasol. Godmamma looked as if she thought it almost indecent. Presently Jean and the Marquis came out of the smoking-room and joined us. The Marquis at once began to pay compliments about the sun on my hair, and was really so clever in getting in little things, while he was talking to Godmamma, that I quite took to him. Victorine had to converse with her future *belle-mère* all the time, and finally the carriage came round, and they went.

They were no sooner out of sight, than Godmamma said, with a long rigmarole, that

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she felt it her duty to you to look after me, and she must tell me that it was *inconvenant* for a young girl to smile or speak to a man as much as I had done to the Marquis. I was so furious at that, that I said, as I found it impossible to understand their ways, I would ask Agnès to pack my things at once, if she would kindly spare a servant to go with a telegram to you, to say I was coming home immediately. She was petrified at my answering her! It appears no one else ever dares to; and she at once tried to smooth me down, especially when I said I should just like time to write and tell the Baronne why I was leaving, as she had been so kind to me. After that they all tried to cajole me, except Victorine, who left the room and slammed the door. And so I have consented to stay, and here I am finishing my letter to you. — With best love, from your affectionate daughter,

An Alternative Plan

ELIZABETH.

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CHAMPS ELYSÉES,
Friday, 26th August.

A Visit to the Dentist

DEAREST MAMMA,—You will be surprised to see this address, but Héloise and I are only staying here for the night, and go back to Croixmare to-morrow. Early this morning she had bad toothache, and said she must go to Paris to see her dentist Godmamma and Jean made as much fuss about it as if the poor thing had suggested something quite unheard of; and one could see how she was suffering, by the way she kept her handkerchief up to her face. Godmamma said she could not possibly accompany her, as she had to pay some important calls; and Jean had promised to be at St. Germain to see some horses with the Vicomte, so Héloise suggested I should go with her; and that we should stay the night at the *appartement* in the Champs Elysées, so that she could have two appointments with M. Adam, the dentist. She has such beautiful teeth, it seems hard that they should ache, and I felt very sorry for her. After a lot of talking it

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was arranged that we should go up by the 11 o'clock train, and accordingly we started with as much fuss as if we had been departing for a month. We had no sooner got to Paris than Héloise felt better. She left me to go on with the maids and luggage to the Champs Elysées, while she went to see M. Adam. *A Visit to the Dentist*

Paris looked out-of-seasonish and full of Americans as we drove through. I am sitting in the little salon now, waiting for her to come in, and I have got awfully tired just looking out of the window. Everything is covered up with brown holland, but I dare say it is nice when they are here. The tapestries are beautiful, so is the furniture, judging by the piece I have lifted the coverings from. If she does not come in soon I shall go for a walk with Agnès.

9 *p. m.* — Héloise came in just as I was writing this morning, and we had a scrappy kind of *déjeûner* on the corner of the dining-room table. Then she said we had better go to her *couturier* in the Rue de la Paix. She seemed all right now, and said

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Paris in August

M. Adam had not hurt her much, and that she was to go to him again to-morrow morning. I always like Paris even out of the season, don't you, Mamma? it is so gay. We had a little victoria and rushed along, not minding who we ran into, as is always the way with French cabs. When we got to Paquin's there were nobody but Americans there, and every one looked tired. Héloise tried on her things, and we went to Caroline's for some hats. They were too lovely, and Héloise gave me a dream; it's an owl lighting on a cornfield, which perhaps is a little incongruous as they only come out at night, but the effect is good.

After that she said she felt she should like to go and see her *confesseur* at the Madeleine, and we started there on the chance of finding him. She kept looking at her watch, so I suppose she was afraid he would be gone. We stopped at the bottom of the big steps, and she said if I would not mind waiting a minute she would go in and see. I always thought one only confessed in the morning, but she seemed so anxious about it that perhaps if you have

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anything particular on your mind you can get it off in the afternoon; it might have been the stories she told about Victorine's liking flowers. I thought she would never come back, she was such a time, quite three-quarters of an hour; and it was horrid sitting there alone, with every creature staring as they passed. *Paris in August*

Directly after she went in I caught a glimpse of "Antoine" in a *coupé*, going at a great pace, but I could not make him see me before he had turned down the street that goes to the back of the Madeleine. I wish he had seen me, for, although I never like him very much, he would have been better than nobody to talk to. I believe I should have even been glad to see Lord Valmond. At last I got so cross, what with the people staring, and the heat and the smells, that I jumped out and went to look for Héloise in the church. She was nowhere to be seen, and I did not like to peer into every box I came to, so at last I was going back to the cab again, when from the end door that leads out into the other street at the back, the rue Tronchet, she came tearing

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Church Etiquette

along completely *essoufflée*. So I suppose there must be some confessing place beyond. She seemed quite cross with me for having come to find her, and said it was not at all proper to walk about a church alone, which does seem odd, does n't it, Mamma? As one would have thought if there was any place really respectable to stroll in, it would have been a church.

I told her how bored I was, and about "Antoine" passing, and how I had tried to make him see. She seemed more annoyed than ever, and said I *must* have made some mistake, as "Antoine" was not in Paris. She was awfully shocked at the idea of my wanting to speak to him in the street anyway, and said I surely must know it was the custom here for the men to bow first. She was altogether so cross and excited and different that I felt sure her *confesseur* must have given her some disagreeable penance. We went for a drive in the Bois after that, and Héloise recovered, and was nice to me. We met the Marquise de Vermandoise and a young man walking in one of the side *alleés*, and when I wanted to wave to

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them Héloise pinched me, and made me look the other way; and when I asked why, she said it was not very good form to "see" people in Paris out of the Season — that one never was sure what they were there for — and that I was certainly not to mention it either at Tournelle or Croix-mare! Is n't this a queer country, Mamma? *Church Etiquette*

We drove until quite late, and just as we were arriving at the door, who should pass but the Marquis? He stopped at once and helped us out. Héloise told him directly that we were only up seeing the dentist, and seemed in a great hurry to get into the *porte cocher;* but he was not to be shaken off, and stopped talking to us for about five minutes. He is quite amusing; he looked at me all the time he was talking to Héloise. I am sure, Mamma, from what the people at Nazeby talked about, he would have asked us to dine and go to a play if he had been an Englishman, and I told Héloise so. She said no Frenchman would dream of such a thing — us two alone — it was unheard of! and she only hoped no one had seen us

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Morals and Manners

talking to him in the street as it was! I said I liked the English way best, as in that case we should be going out and enjoying ourselves, instead of eating a snatchy meal alone.

It is now nine o'clock, and all the evening we have had to put up with just sitting on the balcony. It has been dull, and I am off to bed, so good-night, dear Mamma. I shan't come up to Paris with French people again in a hurry! — Your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Monday, 29th August.

DEAREST MAMMA, — Oh, we had such fun yesterday! After Mass the Baronne sent over to ask if Jean, Héloise, and I would go with them to the *Foire* at *Lavonnière*, a village about ten miles off. It is a very celebrated *Foire*, and in the last century every one went from Versailles, and even now lots of people who spend the summer there attend. You go in the evening after dinner, and there are no horrid cows and things with horns rushing about, or tipsy people. Godmamma looked awfully severe when she heard of the invitation; but since the row, when they had to cajole me, she has been more civil, so she said I might go if Héloise would really look after me, although if I was Victorine she would not have permitted it for a moment. *The Sights of the Foire*

We left here about six, and then picked up the party at Tournelle. They all went — the old Baron, and every one, except the Marquis's mother. We dropped the brougham there, and went on with them

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On a Motor Car

in a huge motor car (that is another fad of the Baron's). It is lovely motor-carring; you get quite used to the noise and smell, and you fly along so, it takes your breath away; even with your hat tied on with a big veil, you have rather the feeling you have got to screw up your eyebrows to keep it from blowing away. We seemed to be no time doing the ten miles. The Baronne and Héloise hate it, and never go in it except under protest. The *Foire* is just one very long street, with booths and merry-go-rounds, and *Montagnes Russes*, and all sorts of amusing things down each side. There are rows of poplar trees behind them, and evidently on ordinary occasions it is just the usual French road, but with all the lights and people it was gay.

We stopped at the village inn, the "*Toison d'Or*," which is famous for its restaurant and its landlady. In the season the Duc de Cressy's coach comes here from Paris every Thursday. Hippolyte was there already; he had been sent on to secure a table for us. We had no sooner sat down

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under the awning than the Vicomte and "Antoine" and two other officers turned up. They had ridden from Versailles, which is near. Such extraordinary people sat at some of the tables! Families of almost peasants at one, and then at the next perhaps two or three lovely ladies, with very smart dresses and big hats, and lots of pearls, and some young men in evening dress. And then some respectable *bourgeois*, and so on. I could hardly pay attention to what the Marquis, who sat next me, was saying, the sight was so new and entertaining. *On a Motor Car*

The tables had cloths without any starch in them, and the longest bread rolls I have ever seen. One of the beautiful ladies with the pearls used hers to beat the man next to her before they had finished dinner. We did not have fresh forks and knives for everything, but the famous dish of the place made up for it. It is composed of *poussins* — that is, very baby chickens — raw oysters, and cream and truffles. You get a hot bit of chicken into your mouth and think it is all right, and then your tongue

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Chevaux au Galop

comes against an iced oyster, and the mixture is so exciting you are stimulated all the time; and you drink a very fine old Burgundy with it, which is also a feature of the place. I am sure it ought to poison us, as oysters aren't in for another month, but it is awfully good.

One of the strange officers is so amusing; he looks exactly like the young man the Marquise de Vermandoise was walking in the Bois with, but it could not be he, as she seemed so surprised to see him at the *Foire*, and said they had not met for ages. The Comte sat on my other side; he said I would be greatly amused at the booths presently, and was I afraid of *Montagnes Russes?* That is only an ordinary switch-back, Mamma, so of course I am not afraid. There were Tziganes playing while we dined, and it was all more amusing than anything I have done here yet. When we had drunk our coffee we started down the *Foire*. There were hundreds of people of every class, but not one drunk or rude or horrid.

The first entertainment was the *Chevaux au Galop*, a delightful merry-go-round

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with the most fiery prancing horses, three abreast, and all jumping at different moments. The Marquis helped me up, and Jean got on the other side; we all rode except the Comtesse and the old Baron. It was *too* lovely; you are bounced up and down, and you have to hold on so tight, and every one screams, and the band plays; and I wish you could do it, Mamma. I am sure the thorough shaking would frighten your neuralgia away. I could have gone on for an hour, but there was such a lot to see, we could not spare the time for more than one turn. The Marquis whispered when he helped me off that his walk down the Champs Elysées had indeed been fortunate, as he had seen me, and that it was he who had suggested to the Baronne to come to the *Foire*. So of course I felt grateful to him. We walked all together more or less, but Jean kept glued to my side, which was rather a bore, only the Marquis or the Vicomte were always at the other side.

Chevaux au Galop

The next place we came to was a huge menagerie of clever animals, with their

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The Ennui of the Lions

Dompteurs — cages of lions, bears, tigers, &c. There were sets of seats before the cages where anything interesting was going on, and the audience moved up as each new *Dompteur* came in to the animals. We sat down at first in front of the tigers' cage, the Baronne next to me this time. The creatures went through astonishing tricks, and looked such lazy great beautiful cats. The *Dompteur* was a handsome man, just the type they always are, with a wide receding forehead and flashing eyes. They positively blazed at the brutes if they did not obey him instantly. I wonder why all "tamers" have this shape of head? I asked the Vicomte, but he did not know. The bears came next, horrid cunning white things, and turning in their toes like that does give them such a frumpish look.

The attraction of the show was to see the great *Dompteur*, Pezon. He had been almost eaten by his lions a few months ago, and was to make his reappearance accompanied by a beautiful songstress who would charm the beasts to sleep. Pezon was just like the other *Dompteurs*, only older and fatter, and

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the beautiful lady was such a pet! *Enormously* stout, in pink satin, with quite bare neck and arms; the Vicomte said that the lions had to be surfeited with food beforehand, to keep them from taking their dessert off this tempting morsel. She began to sing through her nose about "*l'amour*," &c., and those lions did look so bored; the eldest one simply groaned with *ennui*. His face said as plainly as if he could speak, "At it again to-night!" and "Oh! que cela m'embête." When the song was finished, the *Belle Chanteuse* stretched herself on two chairs, making herself into a sort of bridge for the animals to jump over. From our position we could only see mountains of pink satin *embonpoint*, and the soles of her feet. The lions had the greatest difficulty in jumping not to kick her. What a life, Mamma! Then Pezon put his head right into the old lion's mouth, and so ended the performance.

The Ennui of the Lions

When we got outside, a man was ringing a bell opposite, to invite every one in to see a woman with only a head; she could speak, he said, but had no body.

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Inspecting the Machinery

The Baronne insisted upon going in. It was a tiny cell of a place and crammed full. Presently a head appeared on a pedestal and spoke in a subdued voice. All the others said it was a fraud, but I thought it wonderful. "Antoine" wanted to go beyond the barrier and touch it, which was mean of him, I think. Presently a villainous-looking old hag, who was exhibiting the creature, came over, and whispered in "Antoine's" ear. I only caught "*cinq francs*," but his face looked interested at once, and he and Jean disappeared behind the curtain and the head disappeared too, so we went outside, and bought "farings" at the next booth. There they joined us. "Alors, mes amis?" demanded every one. "Pas la peine, très mal faite," said "Antoine"; so I suppose it was the machinery they had been examining. The next thing we came to was a sort of swing with flying boats, but no one was brave enough to try it except the Marquise and me, though all the men wanted to come with us. You sit opposite one another, and they are much higher than the ones in England. Jean would come with me, though I wanted

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the Vicomte — so I was glad it made him look quite green. *Inspecting the Machinery*

It chanced that "Antoine" was beside me as we walked to the pistol booth, so I asked him if he had been in Paris on Friday, and he looked so hard at me, you would have thought I was asking a State secret; but he said that alas! no, he had been detained at Versailles. So it could not have been him after all; there must be a lot of French people exactly alike, I never keep making these mistakes in England.

Have you ever fired off a pistol, Mamma? it is simply horrid. The pistol booth was next after the "farings" shop, and the prizes were china monsters and lanterns, &c. The Comtesse is a splendid shot, and hit the flying ball almost each time; she is such a quiet little thing, one would not expect it of her. The Baronne made a lot of fuss, and said she knew it would kill her, until Hippolyte, who was behind the party with her cloak, said: "Madame la Baronne doit essayer c'est nécessaire que toutes les belles jeunes dames sachent comment se défendre." And she fired off the pistol at last with her eyes

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The Montagnes Russes

shut, and it was a mercy it did not kill the attendant, the ball lodged in the wall just beside him, so we thought we had better leave after that!

Next came the *Montagnes Russes*. How I love a switchback, Mamma! If I were the Queen I would have a private one for myself, and my particular friends, round Windsor Castle; I could go on all day. The Marquis and the Vicomte kept so close to me that Jean could not take the seat beside me, as I saw he intended to, and then the other two made quite a shuffle, but the Vicomte won. The person who sits next you is obliged to hold your arm to prevent your tumbling out. I looked round to see, and every one was having her arm held, but I don't believe the Vicomte need have gripped mine quite so tight as he did. We had three turns; next time the Marquis was beside me, and he was more violent than the Vicomte. So when it came to the last, and Jean scrambled in, and began to hold tighter than either of the others, I just said my arm would be black and blue, and I would rather chance

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the danger of falling out, in a seat by myself, than put up with it. That made him sit up quite straight. I can't see why people want to pinch one; can you, Mamma? I call it vulgar, and I am sure no Englishman would do it. It seems that Frenchmen are awfully respectful, and full of ceremony and politeness, and then every now and then — directly they get the opportunity — they do these horrid little tricks. *The Montagnes Russes*

The next entertainment was really very curious. It was a marble woman down to her waist, and as you looked, the marble turned into flesh, her eyes opened, and she spoke; then her colour faded, and she turned into marble again, and was handed round the audience; was n't it wonderful, Mamma? I can't think how it was done, and as "Antoine" and Jean did not go behind the curtain to examine the machinery, I suppose we shall never know.

After that there were endless shows — performing dogs, fortune-telling, circuses, etc. — but the nicest of all was another merry-go-round, with seats which went up and down like a boat in a very rough sea. Hardly one

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The Fun of the Fair

of them would venture, but I made the Vicomte come with me for two turns; he looked so pale at the end of it, and when I wanted to go a third time, he said we must be getting on, and no one else offered to come. Was n't it stupid of them, as it was by far the most exciting part of the *Foire?* It was half-past twelve before we got back to the "*Toison d'Or*," and there had supper, with "*Punch à l'Américaine.*" It *is* good, and you do feel so gay after it. One of the ladies with the pearls, who was also supping, was so friendly to the man next her; Pezon was of their party, and he did look common in clothes, while he was quite handsome in spangled tights.

We were obliged to go slowly in the motor car returning, there were such heaps of people and carts and things on the road, but we got back to Croixmare about two; and I have slept so late this morning, so now, good-bye, dear Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Wednesday, August 31st.

Back at Croix-mare

DEAREST MAMMA, — To-day is the dinner and *cotillon* at the de Tournelles'. The Marquis and the Vicomte and "Antoine" and every one will be there, and I am sure it will be fun. The Vicomte can't get leave for the night, so the Baronne — who was here yesterday on her bicycle — told us. He will have to ride back to Versailles, as there are no trains at that time, to be there for some duty at six in the morning. I can't tell you how many miles it is; he will be tired, poor thing. These last two days have been just alike, that is why I have not written — the same tiresome ceremony about everything, and the same ghastly evenings.

We went for a drive on Monday, and Godmamma did nothing but question me as to what we had done every minute of the time while we were in Paris. This is the first chance she has had with me alone. So I would not tell her a scrap, even a simple thing like Héloise going to the

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Etiquette of the Bathroom

Madeleine. She thinks I am fearfully stupid, I can see. I forgot to tell you about the morning we left Paris; Héloise went to see Adam again, and I went shopping with Agnès, but I would not even tell Godmamma that! Victorine says spiteful things to me whenever she can, but Jean and Héloise are so charming that I don't mind the rest. We are to wear sort of garden-party dresses and hats at the entertainment to-night. Dinner is to be at eight, in a large pavilion, where they have had a beautiful parquet floor laid down, and then when the tables are cleared away, we shall begin the *cotillon*. As I have never danced in one before, I hope I sha'n't make an idiot of myself.

This morning I very nearly had another row with Godmamma — you will never guess what for, Mamma! She knocked at the door of my room before I was quite dressed, and then came in with a face as glum as a church. She began at once. She said that she had heard something about me that she hoped was a mistake, so she thought it better to ask

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me herself. She understood that I went down to the Salle de Bain every day, instead of just washing in my room. (I *have* done so ever since Agnès discovered there really was water enough for a decent bath there, and that no one else seemed to use it.) I began to wonder if she was going to accuse me of tampering with the taps — but not a bit of it! After a rigmarole, as if she thought it almost too shocking to mention, she said she understood from her maid, who had heard it from the *valet de chambre* who clears out the bath after I leave, that there never were any wet chemises, and that she was therefore forced to conclude that I got into my tub "*toute nue!*" *Etiquette of the Bathroom*

I had been so worked up for something dreadful, that I am sorry to say, Mamma, I went into a shriek of laughter. That seemed to annoy Godmamma very much; she got as red as a turkey-cock, and said she saw nothing to cause mirth — in fact, she had hoped I should have been ashamed at such deplorable immodesty, if, as she feared from my attitude, her accusation was

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The Marquis Again

correct. I said, when I could stop laughing, of course it was correct, how in the world else *should* one get into a bath?

Her eyes almost turned up into her head with horror; she could only gasp, "Mais si quelqu'un ouvrait la porte?" "Mais je la ferme toujours à clef," I said, and then I asked her if in France they also dried themselves in their wet chemises? But she said that that was a childish question, as I must know it would be an impossibility; and when I said I could not see any difference in washing or drying, she was so stumped she was obliged to sit down and fan herself. I smoothed her down by assuring her it was the English custom, and that I was sorry I shocked her so. At last I got rid of her, evidently thinking our nation "*brûlée*," as well as "*toquée*." Now are n't they too odd, Mamma? I suppose a nice big bath is such a rare thing for them that they are obliged to make as much fuss as possible over it. One would think they received company there, dressing up like that! Héloise and the smart people wash all right; it is only

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the girls and the thoroughly goody ones like Godmamma who are afraid of water. *The Marquis Again*

5.30 *p.m.* — The Marquis came over from Tournelle with a note from the Baronne after *déjeûner* to-day. I happened to be getting some music out of the big salon for Héloise when he arrived. Louis, the valet, who showed him in, did not catch sight of me as I was behind the piano, or he would certainly have taken him somewhere else. He began at once (after putting his heels together) to say a lot of compliments and things. This was a fortunate chance — more than he had dared to hope — would I promise to dance the *cotillon* with him to-night? etc., etc. You would not believe, Mamma, the amount he got into the five minutes before Héloise came into the room. She knew it was her own fault for sending for the music that I was alone with him, or I should have got a scolding; as it was, she talked without ceasing until at last he got up to go. I had not answered about the *cotillon*, so as I have half promised the Vicomte I don't know which I shall take; perhaps I could

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A Proposal of Marriage

manage both, as I believe one only has to sit on a chair and every now and then get up and dance. However, I will see when I get there. Now good-bye, dear Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
September 1st.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I have had a proposal! Is n't it too interesting? It all happened at the de Tournelles' last night, but I never blushed or did any of the things they used to in Miss Edgeworth's novels that you have allowed me to read; but I must go straight on. We were quite punctual at Château de Tournelle, and got there as the clock struck eight. Héloise looked perfectly lovely, she does hold herself and walk so beautifully, and her head is such a nice shape. I am going to be like her, and not like the women at Nazeby (who all slouched) when I am married. Victorine looked better than usual too, and Héloise had put some powder on her face for her, but after-

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wards it came off in patches and made her look piebald; however, to start she was all right, and everybody was in a good temper. There were lots of people there already, and the Baronne and the Comtesse received us in the hall. *A Proposal of Marriage*

I wore the white silk and my pink tulle hat. The Marquis and the Vicomte both flew across when we arrived, and the Vicomte got to me first, as Godmamma detained the Marquis; and this is where Frenchmen shine, for although he told me afterwards that he wanted to murder her, he stood with a beautiful grin on his face all the time. The Vicomte at once began to assure me I had promised him the *cotillon*, but I would not say; and as he could only get words in edgeways, with Victorine listening all the time, it made it rather difficult for him. Then the Comte and René, his little boy, came round with a silver basket full of buttonholes and little cards with names, and by the kind of flower we got we were to know which table we were to sit at, as they were to be decorated with the same.

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Les Jeunes Filles

Of course the Baronne had arranged for the Vicomte to take me in; and our table was pink and white carnations. Presently the whole company had arrived, and we started—a huge train, two and two, arm-in-arm—for the pavilion. It was pretty; all the trees hung with electric lights and Chinese lanterns, and the pavilion itself a fairyland of flowers. There were about twelve tables, three of different coloured carnations for the "*jeunes filles*," and the rest with roses for the married people. Godmamma thought it most imprudent separating them like that, and would hardly let Victorine sit down so far away from her until she saw the daughter of the Princesse d'Hauterine at the same table. Victorine went in with another officer from Versailles, in the same regiment of *Chasseurs* as the Vicomte; he was like a small black monkey. The Marquis sat with the Comtesse at her table, and Godmamma and the other bores had a table with the old Baron, etc. The Baronne had quite a young man next her. I expect she could not do with the chaperons and the old gentlemen.

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Most of the girls at our table were either ill-at-ease or excited at the unusual pleasure of being without their mothers, and at first no one talked much. The French country people are almost as frumpy as the English, only in a different way, but many of the guests were very smart, and of course had come from Paris. *Les Jeunes Filles*

The Vicomte did say such a lot of agreeable things to me, and the others were so occupied with their one chance of talking to a young man that they did not listen as much as usual. He said he had never spent such an agitated night as the one at Vernon. So I said No, the fleas were horrid. He said he had not meant *them;* he meant that the sight of my beautiful hair hanging down had caused him "*une grande émotion*" and "*rêves délicieux.*"

There was an oldish girl next to him whom he knew; she has coiffed St. Catherine for several years now, and was put at our table, I believe, to be a kind of chaperon. She happened to be listening just then, as her partner would talk to Victorine's friend — the pretty one with

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The Cotillon

the dirty nails — who was at his other side. She caught the word "fleas," and at once asked what we were talking about. "Un sujet si désagréable," she said. I said it was about our journey on the *Sauterelle*, where, at Vernon, Monsieur de la Trémors had been so badly bitten by the fleas that they had given him silly dreams. He said his dreams were as beautiful as those produced by the Hachis of Monte Cristo (whatever that is), so the old girl exclaimed, "Quel pouvoir pour une puce!" She thought we were mad; and I overheard her presently telling her partner — when she could get him to listen — that no one would believe the *bizarre* conversations of the *toqués* English unless they actually heard them!

I would not say I would dance the *cotillon* with the Vicomte. I told him I had half promised it to the Marquis; and when he seemed offended, I said if he was going to be disagreeable I would certainly dance it with Monsieur de Beaupré (the Marquis's name, which I forgot to tell you before). I remember hearing Octavia say once that it never

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did to make oneself easy to young men, that the more capricious one was the better; and you know how nice Octavia is, and I meant to be like her. He went on imploring; so I told him that I had come there to enjoy myself, not to amuse him, so I should just dance with whom I pleased, or not at all if I happened not to want to. He said I was "*très cruelle*," and looked perfectly wobbly-eyed at me, but I did not mind a bit. *The Cotillon*

As dinner went on all the girls began to talk and to get excited, and laugh, and every one was so gay; but I could see Godmamma craning her neck with anxiety and disapproval, and I am sure, if it had not been for the Princesse d'Hauterine being at her table, she would have jumped up and clawed Victorine away. It came to an end at last, and we returned arm-in-arm to the house, while the servants arranged the pavilion for the *cotillon*. Godmamma collected Victorine and me, and made us stay by her; and that horrid old Mme. de Visac — the one who called me a "*jeune femme*" — came up, and they had a conver-

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Nearly a Duel

sation. Godmamma said it was "*très imprudent*" having the dinner first, that the champagne would go to the young men's heads, and with all the care in the world no one could foresee the consequences! The garden, too! If they should dance the *farandole!* what opportunities! It was all the fault of the *chère Baronne*, so sadly giddy for her age. She never thought of the anxieties of other mothers, having married her only daughter so young! I don't know what Godmamma feared, but I should hate to think you could not trust me to behave like a lady, Mamma, if I was out of your sight a moment.

I saw the Marquis talking to a very young youth; he seemed pleading with him about something, and presently the youth crossed over and kissed Godmamma's hand, then asked Victorine for the *cotillon*. She looked furious, but she was obliged to say yes, as no one else had asked her; it was getting late, and the Marquis was busy speaking to some other ladies. Presently he came up to us, and the young youth said before he could speak: "N'ai-je pas de

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la veine, mon cher, Mlle. de Croixmare m'a promis le cotillon." Upon which the Marquis asked me to dance it with him — right out loud before Godmamma! and when I said I had half promised it to Monsieur de la Trémors, he looked so cross and offended, that I thought it was better to be firm with him, as I had been with the Vicomte. He — the Vicomte — came up just then, and they looked as if they wanted to fight each other; so I said if they would stop frowning, I would dance it with both of them, but if they were nasty, I should not dance it with either; and so that is how it ended, I was to have one on each side. *Nearly a Duel*

Godmamma said to me that it was unheard of conduct, and might have produced a duel, and when I tried to explain to her that that was just what I had avoided, she looked angrier than ever, and would not understand. Was n't it stupid of her, Mamma?

At last we got to the pavilion, and all sat round, and having both the Vicomte and the Marquis to talk to, I did have fun. They arranged that our chairs should

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The Two Partners

be against the wall, and not in the row that the chaperons were behind. Godmamma tried to make signs to me to come and sit by Victorine in front of her, but I pretended not to see, until all the chairs were filled up. The Marquise de Vermandoise was next me, with the Vicomte between; she was dancing with the Comte. We *were* gay! The first set of presents were big brocade bags, and we called one our "*pot au feu*" and pretended it was for the ingredients to make *bon ménage*, and so all the presents that were small enough afterwards we put in there to keep for me. I did have *lots!* A *cotillon* is very easy, Mamma, as you have often told me, and it was fun dancing with all sorts of strange people that one did not even know. In one figure a huge Russian prince got hold of me, and squeezed me until I very nearly screamed; you see, Mamma, how dreadful foreigners are like that. It was like being hugged by a bear in the Zoo; and after it, he kept giving me flowers or presents if I dared to sit down for a moment, but he did not say a word ex-

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cept once or twice a mumble of "Adorable mademoiselle." *The Two Partners*

My two partners *were* nice, we had a perfectly beautiful time, they laughed at everything I said; and Madame de Vermandoise leant over and whispered — while they were both away doing a figure — that never had any one had such a *succès* as me, and that all the old ladies would be ready to tear my eyes out. Héloise did not dance with "Antoine," but he sat next her, and they talked while his partner was away with other people. It is much better to have two partners, Mamma, because then one is not left to oneself at all, and they are each trying to be nicer than the other all the time. The Comtesse led the *cotillon* with a cousin of hers; he does do it well, and does nothing else in Paris, the Baronne told me. At last we got on towards the end, and they began the *farandole*. You know it, Mamma? A lady and a gentleman take hands, then she beckons some one, and he has to come; and then he calls another lady, and so on. It goes on until the whole company are hand-in-hand; and

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To Elope with the Marquis

the leader runs about everywhere with this chain of people after him, dancing a long sliding step, to such a lovely go-ahead tune. The leader tears all over the garden, and one is obliged to follow in and out. It is too exciting, and just as we got to the furthest end of the illuminated paths, and had rushed round into the dark, some one let go, and in the confusion of trying to catch on again, the Marquis and I were left behind.

It was *then* the proposal happened, he did not wait a moment; he talked so fast I could hardly understand him. He said he had heard that it was the custom of our country to speak directly to the person one loved, without consulting the parents; so he hoped I would believe he meant me no disrespect, but that he *adored* me. He had fallen in love at first sight, when he went to review Victorine — that he implored me to fly with him, as his mother would never consent to his marrying an English woman! Think of it, Mamma! me flying with the Marquis! without a wedding cake, or bridesmaids, or pages, or trousseau, or any of the really nice

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bits of getting married — only the boring part of just going away and staying with one man, without any of the other things to make up for it. I nearly laughed at the ridiculousness of it, only he was so deadly in earnest, and would hold my hand. I said I could not think of such a thing, and would he take me back to the pavilion? He became quite wild then, and said he would kill himself with grief; and such a lot of things about love; but I was so wanting to join in the *farandole* again — we heard them coming nearer — that my attention was all on that, and I did not listen much. *To Elope with the Marquis*

Anyway, I am sure runaway matches are n't legal in France, from what I heard Jean saying two nights ago at dinner; and I told him so at last, and that pulled him up short. And just then the train passed, and I stretched out my hand to the last man, and was whirled away back to the pavilion and the people. I *was* glad to get away from the Marquis, because he looked desperate, and you can't trust foreigners, they have

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God-mamma's Friends

pistols and things in their pockets, and he might have shot me. When we got back to our seats, the *défilé* began and I took the Vicomte's arm to go and make our curtsey to the Comtesse and the Baronne. It was just as well the Marquis was away, because they might have quarrelled as to which one's arm I was to take.

Just before the supper tables were brought in, Monsieur de Beaupré turned up again. His face was green; he came up behind me, and whispered through his teeth that I had broken his heart, and that he should marry Victorine! So you see, Mamma, nothing could have turned out better, and they ought to be very grateful to me.

We had the gayest supper, all at little tables; and it was arranged that we should go with the de Tournelles, and the Baronne, to a *Ralli de Papier* to-day, given by the *75th Cuirassiers* at the Forêt de Marly.

While we were going to the house to get our wraps, I overheard two ladies talking of Godmamma. They said she

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gave herself great airs, and considering that every one knew that years ago she had been the *amie* of that good-looking Englishman at the Embassy these high stilts of virtue were ridiculous. I suppose to be an *amie* is something wicked in French, but it doesn't sound very bad, does it, Mamma? And, whatever it is, I wonder if poor papa knew, as he was at the Embassy, and it might have been one of his friends, mightn't it? I expect she had not a moustache then. *God-mamma's Friends*

I am dreadfully afraid the Vicomte won't be able to be at the *Ralli* to-day, although he did whisper when he was putting on my cloak that nothing should keep him away, and that then I would believe the extent of his devotion. He won't have gone to bed at all, if he does turn up, as he will only have got back to Versailles just in time for his duty at six, and how he is to be in the Forêt de Marly by ten I don't know, but we shall see. It is just time to start, the brake is at the door, so good-bye, dear Mamma, with love from your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Thursday Night, September 1st.

The "Ralli de Papier"

DEAREST MAMMA, — I wonder if you have ever been to a *Ralli de Papier?* It is fun. We got to Marly at last after a long drive. The *rendezvous* was in the middle of the forest, in such a lovely glade, and although it rained for the last twenty minutes of our drive, the sun came out when we got there, and the lights through the trees on the wet green were so beautiful. There were quantities of carriages already arrived, every sort — victorias, coaches, pony carts, charabancs, motor cars, and a few of the really odd kinds of shandrydans that one sees coming to country garden parties in England. There were also numbers of officers riding in uniform — *cuirassiers*, *chasseurs*, *dragons* — and they were to take part in the chase. There was one officer who was to lead the carriages in a procession through the short cuts, so that we might not miss any of the jumps, and he had a horn slung over his shoulder. I do think it such a sensible plan; and if we

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could have the foxes trained in England to go just where they should, and then always drive to where the jumps are, like that, how much nicer hunting would be — would n't it, Mamma?

Better than Fox-hunting

Well, at last every one seemed to be arrived, and it was gay. I was glad God-mamma had been too tired to come, so Victorine was actually trusted with Jean and Héloise and me. We had picked up the Baronne and the Comte and the Marquise de Vermandoise at Tournelle on our way. The brake was not quite like an English one; it had seats facing, and then an extra one behind for the grooms, and Jean drove with Héloise beside him; but he does look like a trussed pigeon, and if the horses were not as quiet as mice, I am sure the Baronne would never have trusted herself with him.

They all began to chaff about the Vicomte; "Il ne chevauchera jamais si loin, pas même pour vos beaux yeux," the Marquise said. Victorine seemed annoyed that any one should expect he would do anything for me. "Evidemment

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The Vicomte up to Time

Monsieur de la Trémors ne viendra pas," she said. I saw a beautiful black horse being led about by a groom, apart from the crowd, and I wondered who would ride it. Just before the horn sounded for the carriages to start, from the farthest end of the *allée* we saw an officer galloping as hard as he could. "Mon Dieu! C'est Gaston!" screamed the Baronne. "C'est pour vous, Enchanteresse," said the Comte. "Que c'est ridicule," snapped Victorine, while the Marquise laughed and put her tongue into her gap. "Oh! la belle jeunesse!" she said.

Meanwhile the Vicomte had dismounted, jumped on to the fresh black horse, and was bowing beside us. "Vous voyez je suis venu," he said, and he looked only at me. I don't know why, Mamma, but I felt the blood rushing all over my cheeks; it was nice of him, was n't it? He had arranged it all yesterday, and by changing horses and galloping the whole way, he had managed just to get to the *rendezvous* in time. I don't believe any Englishman that I know would do so much for me, and

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I was touched. We were fortunate in being almost the first carriage behind our leader, the officer with the horn, and he took us across roads, and we halted at last, where we could see the whole hunt advancing to some hurdles which had been erected at a few yards' distance from each other down the *allée*. Such an excitement! every one encouraging them at the top of their voices, their uniforms glittering in the sun. *The Vicomte up to Time*

The jumps were not very high, and most of the officers got over all right, only one *cuirassier* fell, and every one shrieked, but he was n't a bit hurt. We clapped those who jumped especially well, and cried "Bravo!" It *was* fun. Then, when they had all passed, we were conducted through some more short cuts to another set of hurdles covered with green boughs, and these were a little higher. It did sound lively, with horns blowing and people shouting all the time. The Vicomte was among the last, as he passed us following the paper, but he waved gaily. We had to drive very quickly to be in time for the next "*obstacles*," and so it went on.

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Rewards of Gallantry

When we watched the last ones, the Vicomte was among the very front four.

Then the exciting part began, as they had to race for the ribbons, white for the winner and blue for the second; but it was quite a long way, so we had time to get to the winning-post, the flat place near where the Château stood formerly. There were long tables laid out with *goûter*, and the bands of the regiments playing nice tunes. Victorine began to be disagreeable directly we saw them coming, the Vicomte well to the front. "Comme c'est cruel de Monsieur de la Trémors, de presser son cheval à ce point," she said, while even the Comte became excited, and shouted, "Bravo, Gaston!" I *was* pleased when he came in first, and really he rides quite nicely, Mamma.

Then every one got out of the carriages and there was a ceremony. The wife of the Colonel of the 75th chasseurs (young and nice looking) placed a white ribbon with gold fringe ends round the neck of the Vicomte, while he knelt and kissed her hand on the damp grass, and when he got up there was quite a wet stain on his knees.

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Rewards of Gallantry

The second man — a great lumbering *cuirassier* — got a blue ribbon, and as he was heavier the stain showed worse on his red trousers. After that, we all began to eat cakes and drink drinks (I don't know what they were made of, that is why I say "drinks," anyway they were sweet and nice), and as the rain had stopped we danced on the green, after we had finished. Now you know, Mamma, we could never have any fun like this in England. What Englishman would think of dancing the Lancers on sopping grass, quite gravely, with a white ribbon round his neck like a pet lamb, and his trousers wet through at the knees? They would simply laugh in the middle, and spoil the whole thing. The Vicomte danced with me, of course, and while we were advancing to our *vis-à-vis* in the first figure, he managed to whisper that he adored me, and now that he had ridden all night, and won the white ribbon for me, I ought to believe him. I did not answer because there was not time just then, and he looked so reproachfully at me for the rest of the Lancers.

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The Whispered Declaration

It began to rain again before we finished, and we got into the brake as quickly as we could. It was a perfect wonder that they were not all exclaiming at their wet feet, and catching cold; but it seems that dancing on the green and these sort of *fêtes champêtres* are national sports, and you don't catch cold at them. It is only washing, and having the windows open, and the house aired, and things like that, that give cold in France. The Vicomte came back with us, and, as he was one too many for the brake, we had to sit very close on our seat. He was between the Baronne and Victorine, who made room for him when he was just going to sit down by me. She kept giggling all the way home, and the Vicomte looked so squashed and uncomfortable. I was next, beyond the Baronne, and as both of them could not keep up their umbrellas, Victorine was obliged to put down hers, and the drips from the Baronne's umbrella got on to the roses in Victorine's hat. At last they ran in a red stream right down her nose, and she did look odd, and each time she said anything to the Vicomte,

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he nearly had a fit to keep from laughing, and when we got back and she found how she was looking she *was* cross.

The Whispered Declaration

The Vicomte took hold of my hand when he helped me out, it was n't in saying good-bye, as of course unmarried people only bow and don't shake hands. Somehow his spur caught in my dress, and we had to stop a minute to disentangle it, the others had bolted into the house, as they were afraid of the rain, so we were alone for an instant. The Vicomte at once kissed my hand and said, "*Je vous adore.*" It was done so quickly that even Hippolyte, who had come out with an open umbrella to help us, did not see — at least I hope he did n't. We went in to Tournelle to have something to drink, while the horses were being rubbed down, as we had had such a long drive; and it was at the first mirror Victorine discovered her red striped nose.

While I was sipping my punch, I heard the Baronne telling Hélcise that her nephew, the Marquis, had consented to marry Victorine; and that the Baron would go over to Croixmare the next day to make the formal

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The Whispered Declaration

demand for her hand. Then she whispered something, and they looked at me, and Héloise laughed, while the Baronne said, "Pauvre garçon. C'est dommage qu'il ne puisse pas combiner le plaisir avec les affaires." And when we got back to Croix-mare, Héloise came to my room and kissed me, and thanked me; she had heard, she said, from the Baronne, how I had broken the Marquis's heart, and so got him to consent to take Victorine!

I am glad, Mamma, that getting married is differently arranged with us. I should hate to have some one because somebody else that he wanted would not have him. However, Victorine is as pleased as can be, and has been smiling to herself all the evening.

Now I must go to bed, so good-bye, dear Mamma, with love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Saturday, September 3rd.

DEAREST MAMMA,—I am sure what I am going to tell you will surprise you quite as much as it has done me. Victorine is really engaged! The day after the *Ralli de Papier* it rained again, and as we were sitting in the little salon after breakfast the old Baron was announced. He was dressed in a frock coat and a tall hat, just as if it was Paris and the height of the season. They made conversation for about ten minutes, and then he got up and, putting his heels together, he said he had come to request a private interview with Mme. la Comtesse Douairière de Croixmare, and Monsieur le Comte de Croixmare, son fils; upon which Victorine looked coy, and began scrabbling with her toes on the paquet. Héloise was not in the room, and Godmamma said to me that it was time for our walk, as the rain had stopped, and Mdlle. Blanc ("the Tug") would be waiting. So we bundled out of the room, and Victorine for the

In Due Form

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In Due Form

first time became affectionate as we went upstairs.

"Il est venu pour demander ma main, pour son neveu, Monsieur de Beaupré," she said, putting her arm round my waist; "J'espère que cela ne vous chagrine pas, chérie?" And when I asked her why in the world it should grieve *me* she said that, as every one had noticed how I had flirted with the Marquis, she supposed his preferring another girl could not be quite pleasant! I could have screamed with laughter, if I had not been so angry; I felt dreadfully tempted to tell her of the Marquis's proposal to me, and why he was marrying her — only that would have been playing down to her level of meanness. So I said that the English idea of flirting and the French were different; that the Marquis seemed to me to be quite an agreeable Frenchman, and no doubt she would be very happy; and far from it grieving me, I was delighted to think she would be settled at last, as twenty-two was rather on the road to fixing St. Catherine's tresses. She dragged

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her arm away in such a hurry that she scratched her hand on a pin that Agnès had stupidly left in my belt. "Voyez! vous avez fait saigner ma main," she said almost crying with fury. All I said was, "Qui s'y-frotte s'y pique," and as we had got to the door of my room, I went off in fits of laughter — she looked so like a cross monkey I could not help it! *Girlish Amenities*

Well, you can think, Mamma, we did not have an agreeable walk. Victorine talked in her most prudish goody style to "the Remorqueur," and never addressed me; while poor Mademoiselle Blanc was so nervous trying to speak to both. As we got to the turn into Vinant, Monsieur Dubois — Victorine's music-master — came up the street. He is a rather vulgar looking person, with a black moustache, and lemon yellow gloves, and *horrid* if you have to be quite close to him. Just then we stopped to give some sous to a beggar-woman, so as he passed he said, with a great flourish of the hat: Was he to come on Saturday as usual for the lesson? Victorine looked down all the time modestly,

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Girlish Amenities

and "the Tug" answered: Of course; so he said it would be a never-to-be-sufficiently-thanked kindness, if Mademoiselle would take back with her this roll of music he had been on his way to deliver *chez elle*, as it was much out of his road, and he was pressed for time at his next lesson. Victorine at once seized it, and he bowed again and walked on. Mademoiselle Blanc had already a parcel in each hand she was taking to the embroidery shop.

After that Victorine was *distraite*, and seemed in a great hurry to get home; she even spoke to me, and while "the Tug" was looking at wools in the shop she fidgeted so with the music that it came undone. I offered to carry it, as I had no parcels, but she snatched it up as if it was gold, and in doing so a bit of paper fell out of it, and as I picked it up I could not help seeing it began "*Ma cruelle adorée.*" She said, in a great rage, that it was only the words of a song, as she put it in her pocket; so I don't see why she should have been so furious with

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me seeing it, do you, Mamma?— but she had not got over the pin in my belt, I suppose. Anyway she made us trot home with seven-leagued boots. *The Music-master*

Godmamma met us in the hall, radiant, and, clasping Victorine to her breast, said she must announce to her the joyful news that M. le Baron de Frémond had made the *demande*, on the part of his sister, the Marquise de Beaupré, for the hand of her peerless Victorine, for her son and his nephew, the Marquis de Beaupré, and that she — Godmamma — had consented to relinquish to them this treasure. Jean came out of the smoking-room just then and they all began kissing — it was awful.

I got upstairs as quickly as I could, and Héloise soon joined me there. She was enchanted at the idea of really getting rid of Victorine, and she said Godmamma's rheumatism was growing so bad she would soon have to spend the summer at German baths, and so they would fortunately at last have Croixmare to themselves; and she could not thank me enough for having assisted at this *dénoûment*.

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The Music-master

All the evening Victorine played the tunes the music-master gave her, and once or twice broke into a song of joy; but when I asked her to try the one beginning "*Ma cruelle adorée*," she looked green, and said she was tired, and would go to bed.

Then Jean and I had a game of billiards —we often do now after dinner. The *salle de billard* opens out of the salon, and there is a glass like a window over the mantelpiece, so that you can see into the two rooms from each other. It always reminds me of Alice, in "Through the Looking Glass" — you expect to find a mirror, and you see into another room. Godmamma generally accompanies us into the billiard-room, and sits bolt upright in an arm-chair watching us, but to-night she was too excited to pay us so much attention, and stayed talking to Héloise about the engagement. Jean seemed nervous and sad, and knocked about the balls aimlessly, not trying a bit. It is only French billiards, but still one has to play properly, so at last I said that evidently the good news of Victorine's engagement had

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so distracted him that he could not pay attention to the game. He seemed quite startled. "Ma foi! le jeu!" he said vacantly. I put down my cue and asked him quite gently what was the matter? *A Game of Billiards*

Just then the bangle you gave me last Christmas came undone, so Jean put his cue down too, and offered to fasten it. It is difficult to do oneself, so I thanked him and handed him my wrist; his hands trembled so he could not do it. I thought he was ill, and bent over him to see. Fortunately at that moment we happened to be at the one part of the table which can't be seen from the other room; because Jean behaved so queerly — I feel sure God-mamma would have been horrified. He did not worry about the bangle, but just began kissing my hand; simply *dozens* of kisses. I pulled and pulled to try and get it away, but he would not let go, and kept murmuring that at last, at last, he was alone with me!

Now was n't it too annoying, Mamma? I could not call out or make a fuss, because there would have been *such* a scene,

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A Game of Billiards

and you would never think a Frenchman could be so strong. For although I wrenched and dragged I could not get my hand away, and it was making me crosser and crosser every minute. At last, when he began to kiss my wrist, it tickled so I was afraid I should laugh, and then he would think I was not serious; so I seized my cue with the other hand, and just told Jean in a firm voice that if he did not let go that instant I would break it over his head! That stopped him!

He pulled himself together and said "Oh! pardon, pardon," and that he was awfully sorry, and that it was because I was going away soon and he was mad. And that is what I believe it was, Mamma — a fit of some kind. Did you ever hear there was anything odd in the Croixmare family? Anyway it shows foreigners are not to be trusted, for, even if they have n't pistols ready to shoot you, they are doing something queer like this.

Presently he took up his cue and began playing again, and Héloise came in from the salon. She noticed he looked different

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and said at once, "Qu'avez-vous, mon ami?" "Une mauvaise digestion," replied Jean, and he went and drank *sirop* at the side-table. I think I should perhaps tell Héloise what it really was, and warn her to keep an eye on him, but then it might worry her, and he may not have another attack for a long time. No one would suspect him of being cracked, he looks as quiet and respectable as the pony that mows the lawn. The post is starting, and I must go to breakfast, so now good-bye, with love from your affectionate daughter,

Indigestion!

ELIZABETH.

P. S. — The day after to-morrow there is to be a dinner-party here for the *fiancés* to meet. All the Tournelle party, and his mother and a couple of cousins will be here, besides the Vicomte and "Antoine," and the Marquise, who are staying at Tournelle.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Tuesday, September 6th.

Victorine's Indisposition

DEAREST MAMMA, — The dinner for the *fiancés* came off last night. It was the first time we have had real evening dresses on since I have been here. I wore the pink silk, and Héloise was delighted with it, she says you could not possibly improve upon the style you dress me in — it is ideal for a young girl.

The day after Jean behaved so queerly, he was not at breakfast; he went to Paris and I did not see him until the evening, when he was as stolid and quiet as usual, so it must have been a fit, and perhaps he went up to Paris to see his doctor.

Victorine had her music lesson, and I don't know what could have upset her; but "the Tug," who always sits in the room with her, came flying out, saying Victorine was faint and she must get her a glass of water; so I ran into the *salle d'étude* to see if I could help her. There she was flopping on the music-stool, with Monsieur Dubois kneeling by her, looking cross and reproach-

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ful, and just like the villain in the pantomimes. I heard her say, "Cela doit être complètement oublié entre nous à présent que je vais être Marquise." I don't know what it was about, but if she was telling him she would not be friendly with him any more, I do call it snobbish, don't you, Mamma? just because she is going to be a *Marquise*. It is n't as if he was an English Marquis even, like Lord Valmond, that would be of some importance — but a trumpery French title, without any land or money, it is ridiculous. Of course, here no one has his own land really since the Revolution, I mean like "Tournelle," they only call the new house that; I believe the real "Tournelle" is down in Touraine somewhere and belongs to some one else now. This *is* Château de Croixmare, but then Jean's great-grandfather bought it back again. *Victorine's Indisposition*

Now I have wandered from what I was telling you — oh! yes, about Victorine and M. Dubois. He got up from his knees when he saw me, and began fanning her, while she flopped more than ever, but I don't think she felt very faint, her face was so red.

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The "Diner des Fiançailles"

And when "the Tug" returned with the water I came away, as they both looked as if they wanted to murder me. The excitement had made Monsieur Dubois' collar quite give way, and he looked a dirtier and more pitiable object than usual.

Such an affair the "*Dîner des fiançailles!*" Victorine wore a pink dress too, with horrid bunches of daisies on her shoulders and in her hair; and, as that is dark and greasy, and dragged off her face, and done in the tightest twist at the top, it does not look a suitable place for daisies to be sprouting from. I hate things in the hair anyway, don't you, Mamma? However she was delighted with herself, so it was all right.

We waited in the big salon, standing behind Godmamma to receive the company. First arrived the old Baron and the Baronne, and the Marquis and his mother. The Marquis kissed Victorine's hand as well as Godmamma's and Héloise's, and you should have seen her bridling! When he got to me he made the stiffest bow; and just then the Comte and Comtesse de Tournelle, the Marquise de Vermandoise,

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and the Vicomte were announced, and immediately following, "Antoine" and two cousins of Godmamma's. To finish the party there were a batch of the Marquis's relations, who had come specially from Paris. We were spared Yolande and Marie, who usually sit up to dinner with their German *bonne*, and eat everything that they should n't, and then scream in the night. *The "Dîner des Fiançailles"*

There was a buzz of conversation, and the Vicomte talked to me, but I could not help hearing what the Marquis said to Victorine —

"Vous aimez la bicyclette, mademoiselle?"

"Oui, monsieur."

"Moi j'aime mieux l'automobile."

"Mais il y a toujours de la poussière!"

And they are going to be married in a month!

The Vicomte kept bending over me and looking silly, and the Marquis fidgeted so that he could not go on talking to Victorine — one eye was always fixed on us. That seemed to please the Vicomte, for he got more and more *empressé*, and I could not help laughing in return. At dinner he took

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A Contretemps

in Mme. de Vermandoise, but sat next me, and on my other hand was one of the cousins, a harmless idiot too timid to speak much, and with all kinds of horrid baby fluffs growing on his face. If men are to wear beards (which I should forbid if I were the Queen) they ought to be shut up till they are really grown.

Opposite to us were Victorine and the Marquis, and Godmamma and the Baron, and Jean and the Marquis's mother. They did look a dull lot, and the Marquis's mother eats worst of all! We had the greatest fun at our side, Mme. de Vermandoise was delicious with gaiety, the Comte was on her other hand, and we four never stopped joking and laughing the whole of dinner. It was such a big party, so the conversation could not be quite as general as usual.

The Marquis got gloomier and gloomier as time went on. I could not look up that I did not find his angry eyes fixed on me. Even Victorine's aggressive joy at having caught him was damped when she could not get him to pay attention to

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what she was saying. At last when he was straining his ears to try and hear my conversation with the Vicomte, she got absolutely exasperated with him, and addressed a question to him in a loud, sharp voice. It made him jump so that he bounced round in his seat; and as she had lowered her head to put the piece of *bécassine* — which had been poised on her fork while she spoke — into her mouth, his jumping round, and her raising her head suddenly, made her daisies catch on his beard; and you never saw such a funny sight, Mamma! It was a nasty little wired dewdrop that got fixed in poor Monsieur de Beaupré's fur, and there they were: she still grasping her fork and he looking ready to eat her with annoyance. Their two heads were fastened together, and there they would have remained, only Hippolyte (who always goes everywhere with the Baronne) came to the rescue, and untangled them. But it hurt the Marquis very much, as some of the hairs had to be pulled out, and it did not mend matters Hippolyte muttering, " Cela doit être que Monsieur le Marquis doit faire plus attention à l'affaire

A Contretemps

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The Vicomte's Proposal

qu'il a en main, s'il désire garder ses cheveux intacts."

The affair made quite a commotion at the table, and Victorine so nearly cried with rage that the Marquis's mother had to give her smelling salts. Mme. de Vermandoise was overcome with laughter, and her tongue was hardly ever out of her gap, while the Marquis sat, white with fury.

When we left the table, arm-in-arm, things cleared up, and, while we were alone when the men went back to smoke, Victorine was made to "play something," and she really plays very well. It was so stiflingly hot that at last some one — the Comtesse, I believe — asked to have the windows opened on to the terrace. There was a fair-sized moon, and we all went out there, even Godmamma for a few moments. The men came out of the smoking-room windows and joined us, and for the first time since I have been in France we talked to the persons we wanted to, without either shouting across some one else or making a general conversation.

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"Antoine" and Héloise leant over the balustrade; the Comte and the Marquise stayed by the window, while the Vicomte whispered to me by the steps; and Victorine and her Marquis stood like two wax figures, not saying a word, by the orange trees. I don't know whether it was owing to the moon or not, but the Vicomte did say such a lot of charming things to me. He said he loved me, and would I marry him; he would arrange it all, as fortunately he has no parents to consult. *The Vicomte's Proposal*

I seem to be getting quite used to proposals now, because it did not excite me in the least. But I don't think I want to marry any one yet, Mamma; so I told him you would never let me marry a Frenchman, and he had better forget all about me. He said as much about love as he could in the ten minutes we were left talking together, and put it so nicely — not a bit that violent want-to-eat-one-up-way the Marquis has. I felt once or twice quite inclined to say yes, if only it had been an affair of a week; but unfortunately, even in France, you have to stay on with people

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The Vicomte's Proposal

longer than that, and that is the part I could not have managed.

I made him understand at last that I really meant not to have him, and he was very miserable. But you can't tear your hair or cry, with every one looking on, and, as it all had to be done in a voice as if one was talking about the weather, he did not show much. Only he looked very white when we came into the lights again, but he whispered as he said good-night that he did not despair; he would always love me, and when I married some one else his day would come, which I did not think kind of him, as I don't want to be a widow.

The Marquis had not a chance to say a word to me; he tried often, but I avoided him, he looked so out of temper. I am sure it would have been something disagreeable. He and the Vicomte nearly came to blows going out of the door, just over a silly thing like the Vicomte's sword knocking against the Marquis's boot. I hope they won't really fight. When they had all gone, and we were going up to bed, I thought Jean looked as if his fit was coming

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on again, so I bolted into my room; and on the whole I am rather glad to be coming back to England on Thursday. *Hippolyte's Testimonial*

To-day we go over to Tournelle, a visit of ceremony for me to say good-bye, and they are all dear people there, and I shall always hope to see them again. — Now good-bye, dear Mamma, with love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P.S. — I wish his hair was n't cut *en brosse*. But of course one could n't marry a Frenchman anyway.

CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Wednesday, September 7th.

DEAREST MAMMA, — It was really quite sad saying good-bye to all the people at Tournelle. The Baronne almost wept over me, and said that they would be dreadfully dull without me. They all kissed me on both cheeks, and even Hippolyte as he put us into the carriage after I tipped him, remarked, " Mieux vaut épouser un français et

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Hippolyte's Testimonial

rester toujours chez nous, vous êtes trop belle demoiselle pour le brouillard d'Angleterre!"

I wonder after all if the Marquis will ever marry Victorine, as it seems, when he got back last night, he was in such a temper that he made a scene with the Baronne and his mother. He said that Victorine made him look ridiculous, that she was unappetising, without wit, and ugly enough to have tranquillised St. Anthony at his worst moment of temptation — whatever that means. (I overheard the Baronne tell all this to Héloise while the old Baron was making me compliments in his fearful English.) The Marquis stamped his foot, and finally, bursting into tears, announced that he would go to Paris, back to Adèle — whoever she is — and find consolation! So off he started this morning the first thing. What a man, Mamma! crying like a child!

His mother and the Baronne are very anxious about him, as if he really decides to "*jeter le manche après la cognée*," who is to pay his debts! The Baronne also said, that if "Elisabet" (that's me) had only been married, it would have been all a

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simple matter; because then there would be no cause for him to despair, and he would not have occupied himself about an ordinary subject, like who they married him to in the meantime. But, as it is, the contrast between us — Victorine and me — whom he cannot obtain — is too great, and the sooner I am out of his sight the better! It does sound all Greek, does n't it to you, Mamma? I repeat it just as the Baronne said it. *Etiquette for the Fiancés*

We went into the garden presently, and the Marquise and the Comte and I walked together; she had not got over the affair at dinner, and did nothing but laugh and joke about it. She said that Victorine at all events will give the Marquis no anxieties in the future, but she is sure he will have to "*se griser*" to get through the wedding. Fortunately Victorine was not with us, as Godmamma was too tired to accompany her; it would not have been proper for her to come with only her brother and sister-in-law, as her *fiancé*, being supposed to be at Tournelle, she might have had private conversation with him not under Godmamma's eye!

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Etiquette for the Fiancés

Oh! must n't it be awful to be French! Héloise says it is n't so bad as this in the smart set in Paris; they speak to one another there quite a lot before getting married, and do almost English things, but Godmamma is of the old school.

Before we left, the Marquis turned up, he looked thoroughly worn out and as *piano* as a beaten dog. He was awfully polite to Jean and Héloise, and hardly looked at me, but as I did not want to leave with him still feeling cross with me, I got the chance at last to tell him I hoped he would be happy, and to congratulate him. He bowed deeply and thanked me, and then under his breath, as he stooped to pick up a flower I had dropped, he said, "Vous avez brisé mon cœur, et cela m'est égal ce qui arrive," — but I don't believe it, Mamma, he has not got a heart to break, he is only a silly doll and worthy of Victorine.

I saw the Baronne talking to him seriously while we were having "five o'clock;" and just as we were starting, she came up and said low to Héloise, who was beside me, "J'espère que tout va bien, Adèle l'a rem-

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placé, et ne veut plus de lui! Oh! la bonne fille!" So whoever "Adèle" is, I suppose she has done Victorine a good turn. I asked Héloise on our way home if "Adèle" was a relation of the Marquis's; and she went into fits of laughter and said, "Oui, une très proche," but I can't see anything to laugh at, can you, Mamma?

A Country Dinner Party

In the evening there was a *ghastly* dinner party at Croixmare. Three sets of provincial families. They are really awful these entertainments, and so different to English ones! Nobody bothers about even numbers. You feel obliged to ask the X's, the Y's, and the Z's from duty, and so you do. It does n't in the least matter if they are mostly females; you have to ask the family, because if the daughters are grown up they can't be left at home alone — they would be getting into mischief. This is the kind of assortment that arrives: Papa X, Mamma X, and two girl X'es; Papa Y, Mamma Y, and Master and Miss Y; Papa Z, Mamma Z, Aunt Z, and Mdlle. Z — such a party!

Godmamma just revels in these frumps;

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A Country Dinner Party

they make Héloise furious, and the airs of Victorine, her coyness and giggling, nearly drove me wild. I sat next to Monsieur Y, and although he is a Baron of very old family he ate like a *pig*. The food was extraordinarily good, but the proof of good service here is to get the whole dinner — of I don't know how many courses — over under the hour. So one has no sooner swallowed a mouthful, when one's plate is snatched away, and one begins to devour something else. But with this awful man gobbling at my side, and those foolish girls giggling beyond, even the forty minutes seemed ages.

Afterwards in the salon the "*jeunes filles*" were sent to talk at the other side of the room, supervised by "the Tug," who did not dine, but was in waiting. If you had heard their conversation, Mamma! It was worse than the day the two came to breakfast. Just one endless string of questions to Victorine about the Marquis, with giggles over possibilities of their own *fiançailles!* It is so extraordinary that they can ever turn into witty, fascinating women

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like Héloise and the Marquise. Of course, these are just provincial nobodies, whom Héloise would not dream of knowing in Paris; perhaps the girls there are better. *A Cure for a Fit*

Victorine told them the Marquis was "Beau comme l'Archange Michel," and had for her "une brûlante dévotion!" What will she say if after all he refuses to come to the scratch! Jean is to accompany Agnès and me up to Paris to-morrow to see us safely off to Dieppe. I hope he won't have another fit in the train, I shall tell Agnès to take plenty of salts and brandy in her bag, and a bottle of soda water, because I have always heard that a sudden shock is best for people in fits, and one could pop the soda water over him if the worst came to the worst. — Now, good-night, dear Mamma, your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P. S. — An awful wind is blowing. I hope I shan't be drowned crossing the Channel. — E.

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CHÂTEAU DE CROIXMARE,
Thursday night.

The Emotion of the Marquis

DEAREST MAMMA, — I hope you got the telegram all right to-day saying I would not leave. The storm became really so fearful they would not hear of my starting, and as it has turned out I am very glad, for to-night we dined at Tournelle to celebrate the Baronne's birthday, and we had such an amusing time. All the usual lot were there, as well as those two officers who came to the *Foire* with us, and about three or four more people from Paris, so we were quite a large party. Everybody gave the Baronne a present, and *such* baskets of flowers as she had in the salon! "Assez pour tourner la tête," as Hippolyte said.

The Baronne was dressed in pale mauve and looked lovely, only such a funny thing happened at dinner. The Vicomte, who sat next to her, made her laugh dreadfully, just as she was eating her soup, and she choked, and suddenly one cheek quite fell in, while the other stuck out as if a potato was in it.

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The Emotion of the Marquis

One could not *think* what had happened; but it appears that she wears "plumpers," of a kind of red guttapercha, to keep her face nice and round, and in choking the right cheek's one got jerked across into the left cheek, and that is how she got the toothachy look. Must n't it be a bother, Mamma, to have to do all that? but the Baronne is such a dear that one did not even laugh.

The Marquis had to sit by Victorine, and I saw him looking at the pink rosebuds in her hair with a cautious eye; and he sat up as straight as anything in case she should get caught in him again.

But it is all right, he means to go through with it — the Baronne told Héloise directly we got there. So I thought, as it was finally settled, there would be no harm in talking to him a little. He looked at me at dinner, I smiled, and it was so quaint, Mamma, his whole face seemed to flush until his forehead was even pink, with the veins showing at the side. He lifted his champagne glass and kissed the edge of it, and bowed to me, and no one saw but the Comte,

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Elizabeth Sandwiched

and he went into a chuckle of laughter, as he whispered to me that if Victorine had seen she would certainly tear my eyes out on the way home.

Afterwards, in the salon, the Vicomte managed to stand behind me while I was talking to the old Baron, and he said in a low voice: Why had I come back? He was at peace waiting till his day came, and here I had upset everything, and he should have to go through endless more restless nights! I said that I was sorry the storm had prevented my starting, especially as I was unwelcome. So he threw prudence to the winds, and said out loud before the Baron that I knew it was not that, and he looked so devoted and distressed that the dear old Baron patted him on the back, and turning away said, "Mon brave Gaston, moi aussi j'étais jeune une fois." And he left us alone by the window, while he stood a sort of sentry in front.

The Vicomte did whisper a lot of things; he said just for one evening I might make him happy and pretend I loved him, and let him call me "*chérie.*" So I said "all

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right;" I did not think it *could* matter, as I am coming home to-morrow, Mamma, and shall probably never see him again, and you said one ought always to be kind-hearted and do little things for people. When I said "all right," his forehead got pink, and the veins showed just like the Marquis's had done at dinner, and he said, "*Chérie — ma chérie, ma bien-aimée*" in such a voice! It made me feel quite as if I wanted to listen to some more, only, unfortunately at that moment, Godmamma came up; she brushed the Baron aside, and said I should certainly catch cold by the window, and must come with her, while she annihilated the Vicomte with a look. *Elizabeth Sandwiched*

There I was, taken off to a sofa at the other side of the room, and stuffed down between Godmamma and the Marquis's mother. You can think I was cross. However, I paid her out, for I just looked at the Marquis, who was seated by his Victorine almost silent and like a dummy (they are allowed to talk together now, as long as they are not alone in the

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The Fiancés Together

room). It made him fidget so, he could not attend to what she was saying. And when finally he got up and came over to us and said, had I seen the new "Nattier" the Comte had just bought, which was in the other salon, and would I come and look at it?—I think Godmamma wished she had left me safe with the Vicomte. She could not say anything, as half the party had already gone to look at the picture, so I got up at once and went with him. His mother is years older than the Baronne, and not a bit gay like her. I saw them—her and Godmamma—nodding their heads anxiously as we left; no doubt they were deploring the bad bringing-up of the English.

The Marquis said it was awful what he was going through; and when the dancing began presently would I give him the first valse? I said Certainly, and by that time we were in the other salon, and beside the Marquise. She smiled her dear little smile, which always seems to mock at everything, and put her tongue into her gap and whispered: "Quelle comédie! c'est bien petite

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espiègle, amusez-vous!" *And so I did!* I can't tell you what fun it was, Mamma. I was in wild spirits, and the Marquis answered back, and we were as gay as larks, until I overheard the Marquis's mother, who had followed us, say to him, in an acid voice, that he seemed to have forgotten that it was arranged for him to give Victorine the engagement ring that evening and say a few appropriate words to her, and he must take her to see the flowers in the conservatory, and get it over there. So off he had to go, looking black and peevish, and supervised by the two mothers — who stood at the risk of catching their deaths of cold by the door — he and Victorine went arm-in-arm into the conservatory, and disappeared behind some pots of palms.

The Fiancés Together

It appears Mme. de Vermandoise and the Comte were in there too, and saw what happened, and she told Héloise and me afterwards. The *fiancés* came and stood quite close to them, with only a bank of flowers between; and they said the palms were pretty and were growing very tall, and the Marquis coughed, and Victorine began

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The Fiancés Together

scrabbling with her toes on the marble floor in that irritating way she has, and they neither of them spoke. At last the Marquis dashed at it, and said, as she already knew, their parents had arranged they should marry, and he hoped he would make her happy. At that moment the piano struck up very loud in the salon, and prevented Victorine from quite catching what he said; he got very red and repeated it again, but he mumbled so she still was not sure, and had to say "*Pardon?*" for the second time. That upset the Marquis to such a point that he said "Damn," which is the only English word he knows, and when Victorine looked horribly surprised, he dived into his waistcoat pocket and fished out the ring. Then he took her hand, pulled off her glove backwards, and pushed it on to the first finger he came to, which happened to be the middle one! He just said he hoped she would wear it for his sake; and when she exclaimed, "Mais, monsieur! ce n'est pas sur ce doigt que vous devez mettre la bague!" he hardly waited to apologise or put it right before he dragged her back

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to the salon and deposited her with the anxious mothers!

The Baronne's Diplomacy

Mme. de Vermandoise said she and the Comte nearly had a fit to keep themselves from laughing out loud. Was n't it too comic, Mamma? How I should hate to be betrothed like that! However, Victorine seems to think half a loaf is better than no bread, for she kept her glove off all the rest of the evening, and looked at her ring with conscious pride. It is a very nice one, a ruby and a pearl heart connected by a diamond Marquis's coronet. They ought to have added a money-bag representing the dot, and then the symbol would have been complete.

We had begun to dance when they got back, and, as the Marquis had not been there to claim me, I was valsing with Jean. The Baronne kept the Vicomte close to her side all the rest of the evening — she told me, as she kissed me in saying good-bye, that she had done it for peace sake, as she knew he and the Marquis would have had a quarrel otherwise, they were both so madly in love with me. " Petite embrouil-

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The Baronne's Diplomacy

lante d'heureuses familles va!" she said—"Mais je t'aime bien quand même!"—She is a darling, the Baronne! The Marquis stood there glowering, and never offered to dance with Victorine; she must have been cross!

We had another farewell all round when the valse was over—Godmamma would not stay for another, and even "Antoine" seemed sorry to say "*Adieu.*" "Dépêchez-vous de vous marier," he said, "et ensuite revenez auprès de nous. J'ai envie de vous faire la cour, mais vous êtes beaucoup trop dangereuse pour le moment."

"Ça, c'est vrai!" said the Comte and Jean together, and every one laughed.

Now that the betrothal ring is really on Victorine's finger, and Héloise knows she will be got off, she does not mind a bit about the Marquis looking at me. She kept laughing to herself over it all the way home; she really detests Victorine. Godmamma and the bride-elect hardly spoke a word, and I am sure if a perfect hurricane blows to-morrow, they won't suggest my waiting another day, so I shall be glad to be off.

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Good-night, dear Mamma; you will see me almost as soon as you get this, as I shall only sleep the night in London at Aunt Mary's. — With love from your affectionate daughter,

The Baronne's Diplomacy

ELIZABETH.

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RETBY

RETBY,
September 20th.

DEAREST MAMMA,—You might have prepared me for what Lady Theodosia looks like, because when I arrived yesterday and was shown into her boudoir, and found her lying on the sofa, covered with dogs and cats, I as nearly as possible laughed out loud, and it would have been so rude. She had evidently been asleep, and it looked like a mountain having an earthquake when she got up, and animals rolled off her in all directions. A poodle, two fox terriers, a toy Spitz, and a cat and kitten, had all been sleeping in the nooks her outline makes. They all barked in different keys, and between saying, "Down, Hector!" "Quiet, Fluff!" "Hush, hush, Fanny!" "Did um know it was a stranger?" etc., etc., she got in that she was glad to see

Lady Theodosia's Pets

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Lady Theodosia's Pets

me, and hoped you were better. When she stands up she is *colossal!* Her body dressed in the last fashion, and then the queerest face with no neck, and lemon-coloured hair parted down the middle, and not matching a bit with the chignon of thick plaits at the back. It looks as if it were strapped on with a black velvet band that comes across her forehead, like in the pictures on the nursery screen at home that the Great-aunts made when they were children. She seems as kind as possible, and has the fattest wheezy voice.

Her room is appalling; it is full of Early Victorian furniture, and horrid alabaster statuette things, under glass cases, and then a few modern arm-chairs covered in gorgeous brocade, but it is all clawed by the cats, and soiled by the dogs' muddy feet, and you are unable to make up your mind where it will be safe to sit. When tea came in, which it did immediately, you can't think what it was like! A St. Bernard and another poodle joined the party, and while we were trying to get something to eat and drink, they all

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begged or barked or pushed their noses under the muffin dish lid, or took cakes from the side table; and Lady Theodosia kept saying, "Clever darlings; see, they know where their favourite bits are." It is impossible to have a connected conversation with her, because between every few words she puts in ejaculations about the dogs. I was obliged to simply bolt my crumpet like a Frenchman, to keep it from being snatched from me. Just as we were finishing tea, Mr. Doran and three men came in. He is a teeny-weeny man with a big head and rather weak eyes, and he and she do look odd together. What could it have been like when they trotted down the aisle after getting married!

"Clever Darlings"

It is a mercy Lady Theodosia is only your second cousin, and that her shape has not descended to our branch of the family. All the "children" — as she calls the animals — barked again when the men came in. There was only a *miserable* tea left, and, when Mr. Doran ventured to say the dogs had made things rather messy, Lady Theodosia annihilated him. It was as if he had

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"Clever Darlings"

insulted her nearest and dearest! But one of the men got quietly to the bell, and when the footmen came they grasped the situation and brought some clean things, so tea finished better than it had begun. Just before they went to dress Lady Theodosia remembered to introduce them. The only young one is Mr. Roper, the great shot, and the other two are Sir Augustus Grant and Captain Fieldin; they are oldish.

When they had gone, Lady Theodosia said to me that men were a great nuisance as a rule, but that she had a pet friend, a "dear docile creature, so useful with the dogs," and he was coming back by the 6.30 train. You would have laughed, if you could have seen him when he did arrive! A fair humble thing, with a squeaky voice and obsequious manners. He had been up to town to get the dogs new muzzles, as the muzzling order has just been put in force in this county. It appears Lady Theodosia has him always here, and he attends to the dogs for a home, but I would rather be a stable-boy, would n't you, Mamma? His name is Frederick

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Harrington, and Lady Theodosia calls him "Frederick" when she is pleased, and "Harrington" if anything puts her out. And as she says it, "Harrington" sounds the fattest word you ever heard. I was glad to get to my room! *Feeding the Aborigines*

Most of the house that I have yet seen, which was not refurnished when she married in 1870, is really fine, with beautiful old furniture and china; only everything within reach is scratched and spoilt by the "children." It must make the family portraits turn in their frames to see Fluff eating one of their tapestry footstools, or the cats clawing the Venetian velvet chairs.

There was a dinner party in the evening. As we went upstairs to dress, Lady Theodosia told me about it. She said she was obliged to entertain all the Aborigines twice a year, and that most people gave them garden parties; but she found that too fatiguing, so she had two dinners in the shooting season, and two at Easter, to which she asked every one. She just puts all their names in a bag, and counts out twelve couples for each party, and then she

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Feeding the Aborigines

makes up the number to thirty-six with odd creatures, daughters and old maids, and sons and curates, &c., and she finds it a capital plan. She said, "I give 'em plenty to eat and drink, and they draw for partners, and all go home as happy as possible feeling there has been no favouritism!"

She explained that the lawyers and doctors enjoyed having their food with the earls and baronets much more than just prancing about lawns. And when I asked her how the earls and baronets liked it, she said there were only three or four, and they had to put up with it or stay at home; she had done it now for thirty years, and they were accustomed to it; besides, she had the best *chef* in England, and anyway it was a nice change for people not knowing who they were going to be put next to. It took her such a long time to tell me all this, and to see me to my room, that I was almost late, and she did not get into the state drawing-room until all the guests had arrived.

You never saw anything so funny as it was, Mamma. Mr. Doran was trying to be polite

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to the odd collection, evidently not quite knowing which was which. Old Lord and Lady Devnant were glaring at the rest of the company from the hearth-rug, with a look of "You invade this mat at your peril!" Sir Christopher Harford paying extravagant compliments to the parson's wife (I knew which they were because I heard them announced), and the "Squire" and Mrs. de Lacy — who came over with the Conqueror — standing apart with their skinny daughters, all holding their noses in the air. Everybody seemed to be in their best clothes, and most of the women had flowers and tulle or little black feathers sticking up in their hair, and bare red arms, and skirts inches off the ground in front; you know the look. But everything seemed to be going beautifully after Lady Theodosia rolled in (she does not walk, like ordinary people)!

Drawing for Partners

Mr. Doran did the handing round of the drawing-papers, and they were "Marshall and Snelgrove," and "Lewis and Allenby," and "Debenham and Freebody," &c., and if you drew "Lewis" you went in with

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Drawing or Partners

whoever drew "Allenby," and so on; it was a capital plan, only for one incident. I was near Lady Theodosia when Mr. Harrington rushed from the other end of the room, and whispered to her in an agitated voice that the "Dickens" of Lady Devnant's "Jones" was Dr. Pluffield. She was not on speaking terms with him, having quarrelled with him for sending her teething powders by mistake, when it ought to have been something for her nerves. All Lady Theodosia said was —

"Harrington, you're a fool. What are their little differences to me? I give 'em the best dinner in England, and they must settle the rest themselves!"

So poor Mr. Harrington had to go back and smooth down Lady Devnant as best he could; and presently we all started for the banqueting-hall. There were several really decent county people there, of course, but they all looked much the same as the others, except that they had diamonds on. Old Admiral Brudnell, who has a crimson face, was taking in the younger Miss de Lacy, and just in front of him were

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Dr. Pluffield and Lady Devnant, whom the Admiral hates. I heard him say, getting purple like a gobbler, "Come on, come on, I don't mean to let that old catamaran get in front of me!" And he dragged Miss de Lacy through the doorway, bumping the others to get past; and she told me afterwards her funny-bone had got such a knock that she could hardly hold her soup spoon! *Marshall and Snelgrove*

It was quainter even than the frumps' dinner that Godmamma gave. I had a very nervous young man with red hair and glasses to take me in; I drew "Snelgrove," so he was "Marshall." He evidently had not understood a bit about the drawing, and kept calling me "Miss Snelgrove," until I was obliged to say to him, "But my name is not Snelgrove any more than yours is Marshall."

"But my name *is* Marshall," he said, "and I was told to find a lady of the name of 'Snelgrove,' and I wondered at the strange coincidence."

He looked so dreadfully distressed that I had to explain to him; and he got so

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Marshall and Snelgrove

nervous at his mistake that he hardly spoke for the rest of dinner.

The dishes were exquisite, and Lady Theodosia enjoyed them all, in spite of "Fanny" (that is the Spitz) constantly falling off her lap, and having to be fished for by her own footman, who always stands behind her chair, ready for these emergencies. I call it very plucky of the dog to go on trying; for what lap Lady Theodosia has is so steep it must be like trying to sleep on the dome of St. Paul's. Mr. Roper sat at my other side, and after a while he talked to me; he said he came every year to shoot partridges, and it was always the same. On the night he arrived there was always this dinner party, and some years the most absurd things had happened, but Lady Theodosia did not care a button. He thought there were a good many advantages in being a Duke's daughter; they don't dare to offend her, he said, although they are ready to tear one another's eyes out when they are put with the wrong people. Lady Theodosia puffed a good deal as dinner

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went on, I could hear her from where I sat. She is in slight mourning, so below her diamond necklace — which is magnificent, but has not been cleaned for years — she had a set of five lockets, on a chain all made of bog oak, and afterwards I found each locket had a portrait of some pet animal who is dead in it, and a piece of its hair. You would never guess that she is Lady Cecilia's sister, except for the bulgy eyes. Towards the end of dinner Mr. Doran got so gay, he talked and laughed so you would not have recognised him, as ordinarily he is a timid little thing. *After Dinner*

When we returned to the great drawing-room, it was really comic. Lady Theodosia did not make any pretence of talking to the people. Her whole attention was with the "children," who had just been let loose from her boudoir, where her maid had been keeping them company while we dined. They were as jealous as possible of Fanny, who never leaves any part of Lady Theodosia she can stick on to. She is so small that she gets

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After Dinner

lots of nice rides asleep on the folds of her velvet train. Most of the company were terrified at this avalanche of dogs, and kept saying, when they came and sniffed and barked at them, "poor doggie," "nice doggie," "good doggie," etc., in different keys of nervousness. I felt glad Agnès had insisted that I should not put on one of my best dresses. She highly disapproves of this place. As well spend the time in the Jardin des Plantes with the cage doors undone, she says!

Now and then, when Lady Theodosia could bring herself to remember she had a party, she would make a dash at some one, and as likely as not call them by a wrong name. Lady Devnant and Mrs. de Lacy and the few more county people made a little ring with her by themselves, and gradually the doctors', and parsons', and lawyers' families got together, and so things settled down, and we were getting on quite nicely when the men came in. It did all seem queer after the extreme ceremony and politeness in France. When she had fed them, Lady Theodosia

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seemed to think her duty to her guests had ended. *Settling Down*

Mr. Doran was still as gay as possible, and insisted upon Mrs. Pluffield singing; it was a love-and-tombstone kind of song, and sounded so silly and old-fashioned. And after that lots of people had to sing, and I felt so sorry for them; but soon their carriages came, and they were able to go home; if I were they nothing would induce me to come again.

I got up early to write this as the post goes at an unearthly hour, so now I must go down to breakfast. — Good-bye, dear Mamma, your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

RETBY,
September 22nd.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I was surprised yesterday when I got down to breakfast to find Lady Theodosia already there. She is awfully active, and puffs about everywhere like a steam-engine. She will

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Settling Down

pour out the tea and coffee herself, and there is just the one long table, not a lot of little ones like at Nazeby; but our party is quite small, the four other guns were to come from the neighbourhood. Lady Theodosia asks you if you take sugar and cream, and then perhaps a dog takes off her attention, and as likely as not, when she remembers the pouring out, you get just what you have said you don't take. I wonder she does not leave it to the servants.

Mr. Doran was as quiet as a mouse, and said he had a bad headache. The three other men had enormous breakfasts, and did not speak much, except that Captain Fieldin asked if we were not coming out to lunch; and Lady Theodosia said of course we were — she intended to drive me in her pony carriage. When they had all started, she took me back to the boudoir, as it was a Wednesday, and the state apartments were on show, and she hates meeting the tourists from Bradford. I think it must be dreadful having to let everybody look through your home, just because you

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have fine pictures, and it is historical, and a prince got murdered there a hundred years ago. Mr. Doran inherited it through his mother, I think you said, as there are no Lord Retbys left. *A Show Place*

I went to get the photograph of you I always have on my dressing-table, to show it to Lady Theodosia, and I met quite a troop of tourists on the stairs, and all the place railed off with fat red cords, and everything being explained to them by a guide who has the appearance of a very haughty butler, and lives here just to do this, and look after the things. The tourists stared at me because I was inside the rope, just as if I had been a Royalty, and whispered and nudged one another, and one said, "Is that Lady Theodosia?" and I felt inclined to call out "No, not by twelve stone." It was funny seeing them. The housekeeper hates it; she says it takes six housemaids the rest of the day removing their traces, and getting rid of the smell. And as for the Bank Holiday ones, they have no respect for the house at all. Lady Theodosia told me the

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A Show Place

housekeeper came to her nearly weeping after the last one. "Oh, my lady," she said, "they treats us as if we was *ruins*."

Mr. Harrington had not been allowed to shoot, because the St. Bernard and Fluff hated their muzzles so, when they were tried on, that he had to go in to the local harness-maker and have them altered under his own eye. He got back just as we were starting for lunch, and Lady Theodosia made him come with us, and sent the groom on with the lunch carts. She drives one of those old-fashioned, very low pony-shays, with a seat up behind for the groom, and two such ducks of ponies. There hardly seemed room for me beside her, and the springs seemed dreadfully down on her side. She generally sits in the middle when alone, Mr. Harrington told me afterwards. She noticed about the springs herself, and said, "Frederick, you must lean all your weight on the other side." We must have looked odd going along; I squashed in beside her with a poodle and Fanny at my feet, and poor Mr. Harrington clinging to one side like grim death, so as

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to try and get the balance more level. It seemed quite a long drive, and lunch was laid out on a trestle table in a farmhouse garden, and was a splendid repast, with hot *entrées*, and Lady Theodosia had some of them all. *Mr. Doran's Philanthropy*

It appears Captain Fieldin and Sir Augustus Grant are constantly staying here; they help to ride Mr. Doran's horses and shoot his birds. They are all old friends, and rather hard up, so Mr. Doran just keeps them. He — Mr. Doran — seems different after meals; from being as quiet as a lamb, he gets quite coarse and blunt. The rest of the party were just the kind of neighbours that always come to shoot. Mr. Roper told me they never have smart parties, with only the best shots, and heaps of beautiful ladies. Mr. Doran asks just any one he likes, or he happens to meet, and the shooting is some of the best in England, and awfully well preserved.

Lady Theodosia had a very short tweed skirt on, a black velvet jacket with bugles, and a boat-shaped hat and cocks' feathers; but she always wears the black velvet band

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Mr. Doran's Philanthropy

round her forehead. Her ankles seemed to be falling over the tops of her boots, and as she only walked from the carriage to the lunch table, I don't think her skirt need have been so short; do you, Mamma? But although she was got up like an old gipsy you could not help seeing through it all that she really is well-bred; I don't think even Agnès would dare to be uppish with her. They live here at Retby all the year round. The town house is only opened for three days, when Lady Theodosia comes up for the Drawing-room. And they seem to have a lot of these rather dull, oldish men friends who make long visits.

Going home after lunch Lady Theodosia took several of the pies and joints to poor people in the cottages near, and she was so nice to them, and so friendly; she knows them all and all their affairs, and never makes mistakes with their names, or is rude and discourteous as she was to the people at the dinner party. They all adore her. She hates the middle classes, she says, she would like to live in Russia, where there are only the upper and lower.

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When we got back, Lord and Lady Tyneville had arrived with their two daughters. They are about my age, and quite nice and pretty; but their mother dresses them so queerly, they look rather guys. I am glad, Mamma, that you have none of those silly ideas, and that I have not got to have my hair in a large bun with ribbons twisted in it for dinner. They seem quite accustomed to stay here, and know all the dogs and their ways. They are much nicer than French girls, but not so attractive as Miss La Touche. We had an early tea in the hall, and after tea we played croquet until it got dark, though one could not get on very well as the dogs constantly carried off the balls in their mouths, and one had to guess where to put them back, and in that way Lady Theodosia, who was my partner, managed to get through three hoops she would n't have otherwise. It is n't much fun playing so late in the year, as it gets so cold. *Croquet under Difficulties*

I think the elder Miss Everleigh is in love with Mr. Roper, because she blushed, just as they do in books, when he came in, and from being quiet and nice, got rather

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Croquet under Difficulties

gigglish. I hope I shan't do that when I am in love.

We had quite a gay dinner; Lady Tyneville talks all the time, and says such funny things.

I am really enjoying myself very much in spite of there being no excitements, like the Marquis and the Vicomte. To-day we are going to make an excursion into Herminster to see the Cathedral, and to-morrow they shoot again. — Good-bye, dear Mamma, with love from your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

RETBY, *Thursday.*

DEAREST MAMMA, — I don't think I care about looking at churches much. They don't smell here as they do in France, but on the other hand they look deserted, and as if no one cared a pin, and there are generally repairs going on or monuments piled up at the side waiting to be put back or something that does n't look tidy — in the big ones I mean, like York and

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Hernminster that we saw yesterday. Mr. Doran drove us in on the coach, and Lady Theodosia sat on the box beside him. It was too wonderful to see her climbing up, and from the near side she completely hid Mr. Doran; the reins looked as if they were staying up by themselves, you could not see even his hands, her mountainous outline blocked all the space. Miss Everleigh and Mr. Roper and I and Sir Augustus sat in the seat behind the box seat, and the other Everleigh sat with her father in the back, while Mr. Harrington had to go inside with Lady Tyneville as she was afraid of the cold wind. They must have had a nice time, for both poodles were in there too, and one terrier, and we could hear them barking constantly. Fanny, who has a wonderful sense of balance, was poised somewhere on Lady Theodosia. The horses are beauties and we went at a splendid pace.

An Agreeable Drive

Sir Augustus does n't seem so old when he is sitting by you; he said a lot of nice things to me. We went straight to the "Red Lion" and had lunch, and it was

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An Agreeable Drive

a horrid meal, everything over or under-done, and messy and nasty. The dinner at a teeny place like Caudebec in France was delicious. I wonder why food at country hotels in England is so bad? At Retby Lady Theodosia won't touch anything unless it is absolutely perfect. She sent a dish away yesterday just because a whiff of some flavouring she does not like came to her, but at the "Red Lion" she did not grumble at all; it must be for the same reason that wetting their feet does n't give French people cold if it is at a national sport, that made her put up with the lunch because it was English and had always been the same.

I was glad to have a nice piece of cheese. All the time I was with Godmamma I was not allowed to, as it is n't considered proper for girls there, and when I asked Victorine why one day, she told me it gave ideas, and was too exciting, whatever that could mean. So at the "Red Lion" I just had two helpings to see, as this is the first chance I have had, as you don't care for cheese at home. But nothing happened, I did not

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feel at all excited, so it must be because they are French. Must n't it? *Country Shopping*

First we went to a curiosity shop before going to the Cathedral, and there was such an odd man owned it. "My good Griggson," Lady Theodosia called him; he seemed quite pleased — although we none of us bought anything — and so friendly with Lady Theodosia. When we had finished trotting about looking at the old streets and the Cathedral, we went to buy some mauve silk to line a cushion that Lady Tyneville has embroidered as a present to Lady Theodosia. It is so funny in these country shops, they always bring you what you don't want. Lady Tyneville said she wanted mauve, and showed her pattern, and after some time the girl who served her came back and said, "Oh! we are out of mauve, but green is being very much worn."

We went back to the "Red Lion" and Mr. Doran and Captain Fieldin joined us. They had been at the Club all the time, and were full of local news about the cub hunting, &c. On the way back to Retby

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Country Shopping

Sir Augustus told me he was struck with me the moment he came into Lady Theodosia's boudoir, and he tried to take hold of my hand. I call it very queer, don't you? I suppose it is because they think I am young and want encouraging, but I simply detest it, and I told him so. I said, "Why should you want to hold my hand?" and when he looked foolish and mumbled some answer, I just said, "Because if you are afraid of falling, and it is to hold on, there is the outside rail of the coach for you; I *hate* being pawed." He said I was a disagreeable little thing, and would never get on in life. But you can see, Mamma, how everything has changed since you were young.

Lady Theodosia put on such a splendid purple brocade tea-gown for tea, but Fluff would jump up at the tray, and succeeded at last in upsetting a whole jug of cream over her. She was sitting in a very low chair that it is difficult to get out of, and she looked quite piteous with billows of cream rolling off her; it got into Fanny's nose and made her sneeze, and that annoyed

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the other dogs, and they all began to fight, and the St. Bernard joined in, and in his excitement he overturned the whole table and tray. You never saw such a catastrophe! The dogs got quite wild with joy, and left off fighting to gobble cakes, and when Mr. Harrington, who had been away writing letters, rushed in to see what the commotion was, he did catch it! We extricated Lady Theodosia from masses of broken china and dribbles of jam, in the most awful rage. She said it was entirely Mr. Harrington's fault for not being there to look after the dogs. Considering she had sent him to write about their muzzles, I do call it hard, don't you? Mr. Doran came in, and when he saw the best Crown Derby smashed on the floor, and the teapot all bent, he became quite transformed, and swore *dreadfully*. He said such rude words, Mamma, that I cannot even write them, and it ended up with, "If you keep a d—— d puppy to look after your other d—— d puppies, why the devil don't you see he does it!"

Mr. Harrington's Fault

I hope you are n't awfully shocked,

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Mr. Harrington's Fault

Mamma, at me writing that; I was obliged to, to show you what awful creatures men really are underneath, even if their outsides look as meek as Mr. Doran's. Lady Theodosia burst into tears, and it was altogether a fearful scene if it had not been so funny to look at. We none of us got any tea, for by the time Lady Theodosia had been got to dry her eyes, and things were cleared up, we were all only too glad to disperse. I am sure a lot of children could not be so naughty as these dogs are.

Dinner began by being rather strained, but gradually got quite gay. Mr. Doran would have up three different brands of champagne for every one to try, and the men seemed to like them very much. By dessert everything was lively again, and dinner ended by Mr. Doran singing "The hounds of the Meynell," with one foot on the table as gay as a lark. But was n't it tiresome, Mamma? when we got into the drawing-room, Lady Theodosia said we had had a long day, and must be tired, and she packed the two Everleighs and me off to bed before the men came in, and so here I am

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writing to you, because it is ridiculous to suppose I am going to sleep at this hour. Agnès and I leave by the early train on Saturday morning, so good-bye till then, dear Mamma; love from your affectionate daughter,

A Prudent Retirement

ELIZABETH.

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Carriston Towers

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CARRISTON TOWERS

CARRISTON TOWERS,
27th October.

Carriston Towers

DEAREST MAMMA,—I shall never again arrive at a place at three o'clock in the afternoon; it is perfectly ghastly! As we drove up to the door—it was pouring with rain—I felt that I should not like anything here. It does look such a large grey pile; and how cold and draughty that immense stone hall must be in winter! There were no nice big sofas about, or palms, or lots of papers and books; nothing but suits of armour and great marble tables, looking like monuments. I was taken down endless passages to the library, and there left such a long time that I had got down an old *Punch* and was looking at it, and trying to warm my feet, when Lady Carriston came in with Adeline. I remember how I hated

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Carriston Towers

playing with her years ago; she always patronised me, being three years older, and she is just the same now, only both their backs have got longer and their noses more arched, and they are the image of each other. Adeline seems very suppressed; Lady Carriston does not — her face is carved out of stone. They look very well bred and respectable, and badly dressed; nothing rustled nicely when they walked, and they had not their nails polished, or scent on, or anything like that; but Lady Carriston had a splendid row of pearls round her throat, on the top of her rough tweed dress and linen collar.

They pronounce their words very distinctly, in an elevated kind of way, and you feel as if icicles were trickling down your back, and you can't think of a *thing* to say. When we had got to the end of your neuralgia and my journey, there was such a pause! and I suppose they thought I was an idiot, and were only too glad to get me off to my room, where Adeline took me, and left me, hoping I had everything I wanted, and saying tea was at five in the

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blue drawing-room. And there I had to stay while Agnès unpacked. It was dull! It is a big room, and the fire had only just been lit. The furniture is colourless and ugly, and, although it is all comfortable and correct, there are no books about, except "Romola" and "Middlemarch" and some Carlyle and John Stuart Mill, and I did not feel that I could do with any of that just then. So there I sat twiddling my thumbs for more than an hour, and Agnès did make such a noise, opening and shutting drawers, but at last I remembered a box of caramels in my dressing-bag, and it was better after that. *A Dull Hour*

Agnès had put out my white cashmere for tea, and at five I started to find my way to the blue drawing-room. The bannisters are so broad and slippery — the very things for sliding on: I feel as if I should start down them one day, just to astonish Adeline, only I promised you I would be good. Well, when I got to the drawing-room, the party — about twelve — had assembled. The old Earl had been wheeled in from his rooms: he wears a black velvet skull-cap and a stock

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A Dull Hour

but he has a splendid and distinguished old face. If I were he, I would not have such a dull daughter-in-law to live with me as Lady Carriston is, even if my son was dead. The boy, Charlie Carriston, was there too; he does look a goose. He is like those pictures in the *Punch* that I was looking at, where the family is so old that their chins and foreheads have gone. He is awfully afraid of his mother. There were two or three elderly pepper-and-salt men, and that Trench cousin, who is a very High Church curate (you know Aunt Mary told us about him), and there are a Sir Samuel and Lady Garnons, with an old maid daughter, and Adeline's German governess, who has stayed on as companion, and helped to pour out the tea.

The conversation was subdued; about politics and Cabinet Ministers, and pheasants and foxes, and things of that kind, and no one said anything that meant anything else, as they did at Nazeby, or were witty like they were at Tournelle, and the German governess said "Ach" to everything, and Lady Garnons and Miss Gar-

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nons knitted all the time, which gave their voices the sound of "one-two-three" when they spoke, although they did not really count. No one had on tea-gowns — just a Sunday sort of clothes. I don't know how we should have got through tea if the coffee-cream cakes had not been so good. The old Earl called me to him when he had finished, and talked so beautifully to me; he paid me some such grand old-fashioned compliments, and his voice sounds as if he had learnt elocution in his youth. There is not a word of slang or anything modern; one quite understands how he was able to wake up the House of Lords before his legs gave way. It seems sad that such a ninny as Charlie should succeed him. I feel proud of being related to him, but I shall never think of Lady Carriston except as a distant cousin. Both Charlie and Adeline are so afraid of her that they hardly speak. *A Modern Grandison*

I shan't waste any of my best frocks here, so I made Agnès put me on the old blue silk for the evening. She was disgusted.

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A Modern Grandison

At dinner I sat between Charlie and one of the pepper-and-salts — he is a M.P. They are going to shoot partridges to-morrow; and I don't know what we shall do, as there has been no suggestion of our going out to lunch.

After dinner we sat in the yellow drawing-room; Lady Carriston and Lady Garnons talked in quite an animated way together about using their personal influence to suppress all signs of Romanism in the services of the Church. They seemed to think they would have no difficulty in stopping it. They are both Low Church, Miss Garnons told me, but she herself held quite different views. Then she asked me if I did not think the Reverend Ernest Trench had a "soulful face," so pure and abstracted that merely looking at him gave thoughts of a higher life. I said No; he reminded me of a white ferret we had once, and I hated curates. She looked perfectly sick at me and did not take the trouble to talk any more, but joined Adeline, who had been winding silk with Fräulein Schlarbaum for a tie she is

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knitting. So I tried to read the *Contemporary Review*, but I could not help hearing Lady Carriston telling Lady Garnons that she had always brought up Adeline and Charlie so carefully that she knew their inmost thoughts. (She did not mention Cyril, who is still at Eton.) *The Duke's Shirt*

"Yes, I assure you, Georgina," she said, "my dear children have never had a secret from me in their innocent lives."

When the men came in from the dining-room, one of the old fellows came and talked to me, and I discovered he is the Duke of Lancashire. He is ordinary looking, and his shirts fit so badly — that nasty sticking-out look at the sides, and not enough starch. I would not have shirts that did not fit if I were a Duke, would you? They are all staying here for the Conservative meeting to-morrow evening at Barchurch. These three pepper-and-salts are shining lights in this county, I have gathered. Lady Carriston seems very well informed on every subject. It does not matter if she is talking to Mr. Haselton or Sir Andrew Merton, (the two M.P.'s), or

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The Duke's Shirt

the Duke, who is the M.F.H., or the curate; she seems to know much more about politics, and hunting, and religion than they do. It is no wonder she can see her children's thoughts!

At half-past ten we all said good-night. The dear old Earl does not come in from the dining-room; he is wheeled straight to his rooms, so I did not see him. Miss Garnons and Adeline both looked as if they could hardly bear to part with their curate, and finally we got upstairs, and now I must go to bed. — Best love, from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P.S. — Everything is kept up with great state here; there seems to be a footman behind every one's chair at dinner.

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CARRISTON TOWERS,
28th October.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I was so afraid of being late for breakfast this morning that I was down quite ten minutes too soon, and when I got into the breakfast-room I found Charlie alone, mixing himself a brandy cocktail. He wanted to kiss me, because he said we were cousins, but I did not like the smell of the brandy, so I would not let him. He made me promise that I would come out with him after breakfast, before they started to shoot, to look at his horses; then we heard some one coming, and he whisked the cocktail glass out of sight in the neatest way possible. At breakfast he just nibbled a bit of toast, and drank a glass of milk, and Lady Carriston kept saying to him, "My dear, dear boy, you have no appetite," and he said, "No, having to read so hard as he did at night took it away."

Charlie's Dissimulation

The Duke seemed a little annoyed that there was not a particular chutney in his curried kidneys, which I thought very rude

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Charlie's Dissimulation

in another person's house; and, as it was Friday, the Reverend Mr. Trench refused every dish in a loud voice, and then helped himself to a whole sole at the side-table.

The food was lovely. Miss Garnons did not eat a thing, and Lady Garnons was not down; nor, of course, the old Earl.

After breakfast we meandered into the hall. Smoking is not allowed anywhere except in the billiard-room, which is down yards and yards of passages, so as not to let the smell get into the house. We seemed to be standing about doing nothing, so I said I would go up and get my boots on, or probably there would not be time to go with Charlie to see his horses before they started.

You should have seen the family's three faces! Charlie's silly jaw dropped, Adeline's eyebrows ran up to her hair almost, while Lady Carriston said in an icy voice: "We had not thought of visiting the stables so early."

Did you ever hear of anything so ridiculous, Mamma? Just as though I had said some-

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thing improper! I was furious with Charlie, he had not even the pluck to say he had asked me to go; but I paid him out. I just said, "I concluded you had consulted Lady Carriston before asking me to go with you, or naturally I should not have suggested going to get ready." He did look a stupid thing, and bolted at once; but Lady Carriston saw I was not going to be snubbed, so she became more polite, and presently asked me to come and see the aviary with her. *The Slip of Paper*

As we walked down the armour gallery she met a servant with a telegram, and while she stopped to read it I looked out of one of the windows. The wall is so thick they are all in recesses, and Charlie passed underneath, his head just level with the open part. The moment he saw me he fished out a scrap of paper from his pocket and pressed it into my hand, and said, "Don't be a mug this time," and was gone before I could do anything. I did not know what to do with the paper, so I had to slip it up my sleeve, as with these skirts one has n't a pocket, and I did

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The Slip of Paper

feel so mad at having done a thing in that underhand way.

The aviary is such a wonderful place, there seem to be birds of every kind, and the parrakeets do make such a noise. There are lots of palms here and seats, but it is not just an ideal place to stay and talk in, as every creature screams so that you can hardly hear yourself speak. However, Miss Garnons and Mr. Trench did not seem to think so, as, while Lady Carriston stopped to say, "Didysy, woodsie, poppsie, dicksie," to some canaries, I turned a corner to see some owls, and there found them holding hands and kissing (the White Ferret and Miss Garnons I mean, of course, not the owls).

They must have come in at the other door, and the parrots' noises had prevented them from hearing us coming. You never saw two people so taken aback. They simply jumped away from one another. Mr. Trench got crimson up to his white eyelashes, and coughed in a nervous way, while poor Miss Garnons at once talked nineteen to the dozen about the "darling little owlies," and never let

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go my arm until she had got me aside, when she at once began explaining that she hoped I would not misinterpret anything I had seen; that of course it might look odd to one who did not understand the higher life, but there were mysteries connected with her religion, and she *hoped* I would say nothing about it. I said she need not worry herself. She is quite twenty-eight, you know, Mamma, so I suppose she knows best; but I should hate a religion that obliged me to kiss White Ferret curates in a parrot-house, should n't you?

The Mysteries of Religion

Lady Carriston detests Mr. Trench, but as he is a cousin she has to be fairly civil to him, and they always get on to ecclesiastical subjects and argue when they speak; it is the greatest fun to hear them. They walked on ahead and left me with Miss Garnons until we got back to the hall.

By this time the guns had all started, so we saw no more of them. Then Adeline suggested that she and I should bicycle in the Park, which has miles of lovely road (she is not allowed out of the gates by

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The Mysteries of Religion

herself), so at last I got up to my room, and there, as I was ringing the bell for Agnès, Charlie's piece of paper fell out on the floor. I had forgotten all about it. Was n't it a *mercy* it did not drop while I was with Lady Carriston? This was all it was: "Come down to tea half-an-hour earlier; shall sham a hurt wrist to be back from shooting in time. Charlie."

I could not help laughing, although I was cross at his impertinence — in taking for granted that I would be quite ready to do whatever he wished. I threw it in the fire, and, of course, I shan't go down a moment before five. Adeline has just been in to see why I am so long getting ready. — Good-bye, dear Mamma, love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

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CARRISTON TOWERS,
Saturday.

DEAR MAMMA, — Oh! what a long day this has been! But I always get so muddled if I don't go straight on, that I had better finish telling you about Friday first. Well, while Adeline and I were bicycling, she told me she thought I should grow quite pretty if only my hair was arranged more like hers — she has a jug-handle chignon — and if I had less of that French look. But she supposed I could not help it, having had to spend so much time abroad. She said I should find life was full of temptations, if I had not an *anchor*. I asked her what that was, and she said it was something on which to cast one's soul. I don't see how that could be an anchor — do you, Mamma? because it is the anchor that gets cast, is n't it? However, she assured me that it was, so I asked her if she had one herself, and she said she had, and it was her great reverence for Mr. Trench, and they were secretly engaged! and she hoped I would not mention it to anybody;

An Anchor in Life

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An Anchor in Life

and presently, when he joined us, would I mind riding on, as she had so few chances to talk to him? That she would not for the world deceive her mother, but there were mysteries connected with her religion which Lady Carriston could not understand, being only Low Church. But when they saw a prospect of getting married they would tell her about it; if they did it now, she would persuade the Duke not to give Mr. Trench the Bellestoke living, which he has half promised him, and so make it impossible for them to marry.

I asked her if Mr. Trench was Miss Garnons' anchor too? and she seemed quite annoyed, so I suppose their religion has heaps of different mysteries; but I don't see what all that has got to do with telling her mother, do you? And I should rather turn Low Church than have to kiss Mr. Trench, anyway. He came from a side path and joined us, and as soon as I could I left them; but they picked me up again by the inner gate, just as I was going in to lunch, after having had a beautiful ride. The Park is magnificent.

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At lunch I sat by the old Earl. He said my hair was a sunbeam's home, and that my nose was fit for a cameo; he is perfectly charming. Afterwards we went *en bloc* to the library, and the Garnons began to knit again. Nobody says a word about clothes; they talked about the Girls' Friendly Society, and the Idiot Asylum, and the Flannel Union, and Higher Education, and whenever Lady Garnons mentions any one that Lady Carriston does not know all about, she always says, "Oh! and *who was* she?" And then, after thoroughly sifting it, if she finds that the person in question does not belong to any of the branches of the family that she is acquainted with, she says "Society is getting very mixed now." Presently about six more people arrived. There seems to be nothing but these ghastly three o'clock trains here. All the new lot were affected by it, just as I was. There were endless pauses.

Putting on the Clock

I would much rather scream at Aunt Maria for a whole afternoon than have to spend it with Lady Carriston. I am sure she and Godmamma would be the greatest

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Putting on the Clock

friends if they could meet. When I got up to my room I was astonished to find it was so late. I had not even scrambled into my clothes when the clock struck five. I had forgotten all about Charlie and his scrap of paper, but when I got into the blue drawing-room, there he was, with his wrist bandaged up, and no signs of tea about. What do you think the horrid boy had done, Mamma? Actually had the big gold clock in my room put on! There were ten chances to one, he said, against my looking at my watch, and he knew I would not come down unless I thought it was five. I was so cross that I wanted to go upstairs again, but he would not let me; he stood in front of the door, and there was no good making a fuss, so I sat down by the fire.

He said he had seen last night how struck his Grandfather had been with me, and he did want me to get round him, as he had got into an awful mess, and had not an idea how he was going to get out of it, unless I helped him. I said I was sorry, but I really did not see how I could do

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anything, and that he had better tell his Mother, as she adored him. *Cora's Necklace*

He simply jumped with horror at the idea of telling his Mother. "Good Lord!" he said, "the old girl would murder me," which I did not think very respectful of him. Then he fidgeted, and humm'd and haw'd for such a time that tea had begun to come in before I could understand the least bit what the mess was; but it was something about a Cora de la Haye, who dances at the Empire, and a diamond necklace, and how he was madly in love with her, and intended to marry her, but he had lost such a lot of money at Goodwood, that no one knew about, as he was supposed not to have been there, that he could not pay for the necklace unless his grandfather gave him a lump sum to pay his debts at Oxford with, and that what he wanted was for me to get round the old Earl to give him this money, and then he could pay for Cora de la Haye's necklace.

He showed me her photo, which he keeps in his pocket. It is just like the ones in the shops in the Rue de Rivoli

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Cora's Necklace

that Mademoiselle never would let me stop and look at in Paris. I am sure Lady Carriston can't have been having second sight into her children's thoughts lately!

Just then Lady Garnons and some of the new people came in, and he was obliged to stop. We had a kind of high tea, as the Conservative meeting was to be at eight, and it is three-quarters of an hour's drive into Barchurch, and there was to be a big supper after. Lady Carriston did make such a fuss over Charlie's wrist. She wanted to know was it badly sprained, and did it ache much, and was it swollen, and he had the impudence to let her almost cry over him, and pretended to wince when she touched it! As we were driving in to the meeting he sat next me in the omnibus, and kept squeezing my arm all the time under the rug, which did annoy me so, that at last I gave his ankle a nasty kick, and then he left off for a little. He has not the ways of a gentleman, and I think he had better marry his Cora, and settle down into a class more suited to him than ours; but *I* shan't help him with his Grandfather.

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Politics and Principle

Have you ever been to a political meeting, dear Mamma? It is funny! All these old gentlemen sit up on a platform and talk such a lot. The Duke put in "buts" and "ifs" and "thats" over and over again when he could not think of a word, and you were n't a bit the wiser when he had finished, except that it was awfully wrong to put up barbed wire; but I can't see what that has to do with politics, can you? One of the pepper-and-salts did speak nicely, and so did one of the new people — quite a youngish person; but they all had such a lot of words, when it would have done just as well if they had simply said that of course our side was the right one — because trade was good when we were in, and that there are much better people Conservatives than Radicals. Anyway, no one stays a Radical when he gets to be his own father, as it would be absurd to cut off one's nose to spite one's face — don't you think so, Mamma? So it is nonsense talking so much.

One or two rude people in the back called out things, but no one paid any attention;

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Politics and Principle

and at last, after lots of cheering, we got into the omnibus again. I *was* hungry. At supper we sat more or less anyhow, and I happened to be next the youngish person who spoke. I don't know his name, but I know he wasn't any one very grand, as Lady Carriston said, before they arrived in the afternoon, that things were changing dreadfully; that even the Conservative party was being invaded by people of no family; and she gave him two fingers when she said "How d'ye do?" But if he is nobody, I call it very nice of him to be a Conservative, and then he won't have to change afterwards when he gets high up. The old Earl asked me what I thought of it all, so I told him; and he said that it was a great pity they could not have me at the head of affairs, and then things would be arranged on a really simple and satisfactory basis.

After breakfast this morning most of the new people went, and the Duke and the pepper-and-salts; Lady Carriston drove Lady Garnons over to see her Idiot Asylum. They were to lunch near there, so we had our food in peace without them, and you

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would not believe the difference there was! Every one woke up: Old Sir Samuel Garnons, who had not spoken once that I heard since I came, joked with Fräulein Schlarbaum. Charlie had two brandies-and-sodas instead of his usual glass of milk, and Adeline and Miss Garnons were able to gaze at their *anchor* without fear. *A Good Protestant*

This afternoon I have been for a ride with Charlie, and do you know, Mamma, I believe he is trying to make love to me, but it is all in such horrid slang that I am not quite sure. I must stop now. — With love, from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P. S. — Sunday. I missed the post last night. We did spend a boring evening doing nothing, not even dummy whist, like at Aunt Maria's, and I was so tired hearing the two old ladies talking over the idiots they had seen at the Asylum, that I was thankful when half-past ten came. As for to-day, I am glad it is the last one I shall spend here. There is a settled gloom over everything, a sort of Sunday feeling that makes one eat

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A Good Protestant

too much lunch. Mr. Trench had been allowed to conduct the service in the chapel this morning, and Lady Carriston kept tapping her foot all the time with annoyance at all his little tricks, and once or twice, when he was extra go-ahead, I heard her murmuring to herself "Ridiculous!" and "Scandalous!" What *will* she do when he is her son-in-law?

Adeline and Miss Garnons knelt whenever they could, and as long as they could, and took off their gloves and folded their hands. I think Adeline hates Miss Garnons, because she is allowed to cross herself; and of course Adeline dare n't, with her mother there.

After tea Charlie managed to get up quite close to me in a corner, and he said in a low voice that I was "a stunner," and that if I would just "give him the tip," he'd "chuck Cora to-morrow;" that I "could give her fits!" And if that is an English proposal, Mamma, I would much rather have the Vicomte's or the Marquis's.

We are coming by the evening train to-morrow; so till then good-bye. — Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

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Chevenix Castle

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CHEVENIX CASTLE

CHEVENIX CASTLE,
8th November.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I am sure I shall enjoy myself here. The train was so late, and only two other people were coming by it besides me, so we all drove up in the omnibus together. One was a man, and the other a woman, and she glared at me, and fussed her maid so about her dressing-bag, and it was such a gorgeous affair, and they had such quantities of luggage, and the only thing they said on the drive up was how cold it was, and they wondered when we should get there. And when we did arrive, there was only just time to rush up and dress for dinner; all the other people had come by an earlier train. I left them both in the care of the groom of the chambers, as even Cousin

Chevenix Castle

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Chevenix Castle

Octavia had gone upstairs, and there was not a soul about, but she had left a message for me; and while Agnès was clawing the things out of the trunks, I went to her room.

She was just having her hair done, but she did not mind a bit, and was awfully glad to see me. She is a *dear*. Her hair is as dark as anything underneath, but all the outside is a bright red. She says it is much more attractive like that, but it does look odd before the front thing is on, and that is a fuzzy bit in a net, like what Royalties have. And then she has lots of twist-things round at the back, and although it does n't look at all bad when the diamond stick-ups are in and she is all arranged. She went on talking all the time while her maid was fixing it, just as if we were alone in the room. She told me I had grown six inches since she was with us at Arcachon three years ago, and that I was quite good-looking. She said they had a huge party for the balls, some rather nice people, and Lady Doraine and one or two others she hated. I said

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why did she have people she hated — that I would not if I were a Countess like her; so she said those were often the very ones one was obliged to have, because the nice men would n't come without them. *The Test of a Gentleman*

She hoped I had some decent clothes, as she had got a tame millionaire for me. So I said if it was Mr. Wertz she need not bother because I knew him; and, besides, I only intended to marry a gentleman, unless, of course, I should get past twenty and *passé*, and then, goodness knows *what* I might take. She laughed, and said it was ridiculous to be so particular, but that anyway that would be no difficulty, as every one was a gentleman now who paid for things.

Then she sent me off to dress, just as she began to put some red stuff on her lips. It is wonderful how nice she looks when everything is done, even though she has quite a different coloured chest to the top bit that shows above her pearl collar, which is brickish-red from hunting. So is her face, but she is such a dear that one admires even her great big nose and little

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The Test of a Gentleman

black eyes, which one would think hideous in other people. I met Tom just going into her room as I came out; he said he had come to borrow some scent from her. He looks younger than she does, but they were the same age when they got married, were n't they?

He kissed me and said I was a dear little cousin, and had I been boxing any one's ears lately. Before I could box his for talking so, Octavia called out to him to let me go, or I should be late, and had I not to scurry just? Agnès fortunately had everything ready, but I fussed so that my face was crimson when I got downstairs, and every one was already there.

There seemed to be dozens of people. You will see in the list in the *Morning Post* to-morrow what a number of the Nazeby set there are here.

Lord Valmond is here, but he did not see me until we were at dinner. I went in with Mr. Hodgkinson, who is contesting this Division; he is quite young and wears an eyeglass, which he keeps dropping. He really looks silly, but they say he says

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some clever things if you give him time, and that he will be a great acquisition to the party he has joined now, as it is much easier to get made a peer by the Radicals; and that is what he wants, as his father made a huge fortune in bones and glue. *The Game of Bridge*

He did not talk to me at all, but eat his dinner at first, and then said: "I don't believe in talking before the fish, do you?"

So I said: "No, nor till after the ices, unless one has something to say."

He was so surprised that his eyeglass dropped, and he had to fumble to find it, so by that time I had begun to talk to old Colonel Blake, who was at the other side of me.

Lady Doraine was looking so pretty; her hair has grown much fairer and nicer than it was at Nazeby. Lord Doraine is here too; his eyes are so close together! He plays a game called "Bridge" with Mr. Wertz and Mr. Hodgkinson and Tom all the time — I mean in the afternoon before dinner — so Mr. Hodgkinson told me when we got to dessert. I suppose it was

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The Game of Bridge

the first thing he had found to say! I asked him if it was a kind of leap-frog; because don't you remember we called it "Bridge" when you had to jump two? He said No; that it was a game of cards, and much more profitable if one had the luck of Lord Doraine, who had won heaps of money from Mr. Wertz. Afterwards, in the drawing-room, Lady Doraine came up to me and asked me where I had been hiding since the Nazeby visit, and when she heard I had been in France, she talked a lot about the fashions. She has such a splendid new rope of pearls, and such lovely clothes. The Rooses are here too, and Jane has a cold in her head. She says she heard by this evening's post that Miss La Touche is going to be married to old Lord Kidminster, and that he is "too deaf to have heard everything, so it is just as well." I can't see why, as Miss La Touche is so nice, and never talks rubbish; so I think it a pity he can't hear all she says, don't you?

Lady Doraine calls Octavia "darling!" She stood fiddling with her diamond chain

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and purring over her frock, so I suppose she is fond of her in spite of Octavia hating her. *An Englishman's Views*

After dinner Lord Valmond came up to me at once. I felt in such a good temper, it was hard to be very stiff, he seemed so awfully glad to see me. He said I might have let him know what day it was that I crossed over to France after leaving Hazeldene Court — he would have taken such care of me. I said I was quite able to take care of myself. Then he asked me if the people were nice in France? and when I said perfectly charming, he said some Frenchwomen were n't bad but the men were monkeys. I said it showed how little he knew about them, I had found them delightful, always polite and respectful and amusing, quite a contrast to some English people one was obliged to meet.

His eyes blazed like two bits of blue fire, and when he looked like that, it made my heart beat, Mamma, I don't know why. He is so nice-looking, of course no Frenchman could compare to him, but I was obliged to go on praising them because

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An Englishman's Views

it annoyed him so. He said I must have stayed there ages, he had been wondering and wondering when he was to see me again. He said Mr. Hodgkinson was an ass, and he had been watching us at dinner.

Then Lord Doraine came up and Lady Doraine introduced him to me, and he said a number of nice things, and he has a charming voice; and Mr. Wertz came up too, and spoke to me; and then Lady Doraine called Lord Valmond to come and sit on the little sofa by her, and she looked at him so fondly that I thought perhaps Lord Doraine might not like it. He tried not to see, but Mr. Wertz *did*, and I think he must have a kind heart, because he fidgeted so, and almost at once went and joined them to break up the tête-à-tête, so that Lord Doraine might not be teased any more, I suppose. And every one went to bed rather early, because of the ball and shoot to-morrow, and I must jump in too, as I am sleepy, so good-night, dearest Mamma. — Your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

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CHEVENIX CASTLE,
9th November.

DEAREST MAMMA, — Such a lot to tell you, and no time, as I must go down to tea. We passed rather a boring morning after the men had started for their shoot. Only a few people were down for breakfast, and none of the men who were n't guns. I suppose they were asleep. But Lady Grace Fenton was as cross as a bear because she wanted to go and shoot too. She is just like a man, and does look so odd and almost improper in the evening in female dress. And Tom won't have women out shooting, except for lunch. Lady Doraine and Lady Greswold talked by the fire while they smoked, and Lady Greswold said she really did not know where the peers were to turn to now to make an honest penny, their names being no more good in the City, and that it was abominably hard that now, she had heard, they would have to understand business and work just like ordinary Stock Exchange people if they wanted to get on, and she did not know what things were coming to.

The Peers' Sad Case

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The Peers' Sad Case

At lunch, in the châlet in the wood, it was rather fun. Mr. Hodgkinson and Lord Doraine sat on either side of me. Lord Valmond came up with the last guns, rather late, and he looked round the table and frowned. He seems quite grumpy now, not half so good-tempered as he used to be. I expect it is because Mrs. Smith is n't here.

Mr. Wertz was so beautifully turned out in the newest clothes and the loveliest stockings, and he had two loaders and three guns, and Lord Doraine told me that he had killed three pheasants, but the ground was knee-deep in cartridges round him, and Tom was furious, as he likes an enormous bag. So I asked why, if Mr. Wertz was not a sportsman, had he taken the huge Quickham shoot in Norfolk? Then Mr. Hodgkinson chimed in: "Oh! to entertain Royalty and the husbands of his charming lady friends!" and he fixed his eyeglass and looked round the corner of it at Lord Doraine, who drank a glass of peach brandy.

After lunch the men had to start quickly,

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as we had dawdled so, and so we turned to go back to the house. *The Millionaires*

Octavia put her arm through mine, and we were walking on, when Lady Doraine joined us, with the woman who had glared at me in the omnibus. She looked as if she hated walking. She is not actually stout, but everything is as tight as possible, and it does make her puff. She was awfully smart, and had the thinnest boots on. Lady Doraine was being so lovely to her, and Octavia was in one of her moods when she talks over people's heads, so we had not a very pleasant walk, until we came to the stable gate, when Octavia and I went that way to see her new hunters. We had hardly got out of hearing when she said —

"Really, Elizabeth, how I dislike women!"

So I asked her who the puffing lady was, and she said a Mrs. Pike, the new Colonial millionairess.

"Horrid creature, as unnecessary as can be!"

So I asked her why she had invited her, then. And she said her sister-in-law, Carry, had got round Tom and made a point of it,

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The Millionaires

as she was running them, and now Carry had got the measles and could not come to look after the creature herself; and it would serve her right if Folly Doraine took them out of her hands. And so you see, Mamma, everything has changed from your days, because this is n't a person you would dream of knowing. I don't quite understand what "running them" means, and as Octavia was a little out of temper, I did not like to ask her; but Jane Roose is sure to know, so I will find out and tell you.

I went and played with the children when we got in. They are such ducks, and we had a splendid romp. Little Tom is enormous for five, and so clever, and Gwynnie is the image of Octavia when her hair was dark. Now I *must* go down to tea.

7.30. — I was so late. Every one was there when I got down in such gorgeous tea-gowns; I wore my white mousseline delaine frock. The Rooses have the look of using out their summer best dresses. Jane's cold is worse. The guns had got back, and came straggling in one by one, as they dressed, quickly or slowly; and

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Lord Doraine had such a lovely velvet suit on, and he said such nice things to me; and Lord Valmond sat at the other side, and seemed more ill-tempered than ever. I can't think what is the matter with him. At last he asked me to play Patience with him; so I said that was a game one played by oneself, and he said he knew quite a new one which he was sure I would like to learn; but I did not particularly want to just then. Lady Doraine was showing Mr. Wertz her new one at the other side of the hall. There are some cosy little tables arranged for playing cards, with nice screens near, so that the other people's counting, &c., may not put one out.

Teaching Patience

Mrs. Pike was too splendid for words, in petunia satin, and sable, and quantities of pearl chains; and Tom was trying to talk to her. Nobody worries about Mr. Pike much; but Lord Doraine took him off to the billiard-room, after collecting Mr. Wertz, to play "Bridge" — everybody plays "Bridge," I find — and then Lady Doraine came and joined Lord Valmond and me on the big sofa.

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Teaching Patience

Lord Valmond hardly spoke after that, and she teased him and said: "Harry, what a child you are!" and she looked as sweetly malicious as the tortoise-shell cat at home does when it is going to scratch while it is purring. And presently Dolly Tenterdown came over to us (he is in Cousin Jack's battalion of the Coldstreams, and he looks about fifteen, but he behaves very "grown up"), and he asked Lady Doraine to come and teach him her new "Patience"; and they went to one of the screen tables, and Lord Valmond said he was a charming fellow, but I thought he looked silly, and I do *wonder* what she found to say to him. She must be quite ten years older than he is, and Jane Roose says it is an awful sign of age when people play with boys.

Lord Valmond asked me to keep him some dances to-night, but I said I really did not know what I should do until it began, as I had never been at a ball before. I haven't forgiven him a bit, so he need not think I have. Now I must stop. Oh! I am longing to put on my white

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tulle, and I do feel excited. — Your affectionate daughter

A Modern Industry

ELIZABETH.

P.S. — I asked Jane Roose what "running them" means, and it's being put on to things in the City, and having all your bills paid if you introduce them to people; only you sometimes have to write their letters for them to prevent them putting the whole grand address, &c., that is in the Peerage; and she says it is quite a profession now, and done by the best people, which of course must be true, as Carry is Tom's sister. E.

CHEVENIX CASTLE,
10th November.

DEAREST MAMMA, — Oh! it was too, too lovely, last night. I am having my breakfast in bed to-day, just like the other grown-up people, and it really feels so grand to be writing to you between sips of tea and nibbles of toast and strawberry

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A Modern Industry

jam! Well, to tell you about the ball. First my white tulle was a dream. Octavia said it was by far the prettiest débutante frock she had ever seen; and when I was dressed she sent for me to her room, and Tom was there too, and she took out of a duck of a white satin case a lovely string of pearls and put it round my throat, and said it was their present to me for my first ball! Was n't it angelic of them? I hugged and kissed them both, and almost squashed Tom's buttonhole into his pink coat, I was so pleased, but he said he did n't mind; and then we all went down together, and no one else was ready, so we looked through the rooms. The dancing, of course, was to be in the picture gallery, and the flowers were so splendid everywhere, and Octavia was quite satisfied. It is a mercy it is such a big house, for we were n't put out a bit beforehand by the preparations.

I don't know if you were ever like that, Mamma, but I felt as if I must jump about and sing, and my cheeks were burning. Octavia sat down and played a valse,

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and Tom and I opened the ball by ourselves in the empty room, and it *was* fun, and then we saw Lord Valmond peeping in at the door, and he came up and said Tom was not to be greedy, and so I danced the two last rounds with him, and he had such a strange look in his eyes, a little bit like Jean when he had the fit, and he never said one word until we stopped. *Forgiveness*

Then Octavia went out of the other door, and I don't know where Tom went, but we were alone, and so he said, would I forgive him for everything and be friends, that he had never been so sorry for anything in his life as having offended me. He really seemed so penitent, and he does dance so beautifully, and he is so tall and nice in his pink coat; and, besides, I remembered his dinner with Aunt Maria, and how nasty I had been to him at Hazeldene! So I said, all right I would try, if he would promise never to be horrid again; and he said he would n't; and then we shook hands, and he said I looked lovely, and that my frock was perfect; and then Tom came back and we went into the

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Forgiveness

hall, and everybody was down, and they had drawn for partners to go in to dinner while we were in the ball-room. Tom had made Octavia arrange that we should draw, as he said he could not stand Lady Greswold two nights running. Octavia said she had drawn for Lord Valmond because he was n't there, and that his slip of paper was *me*, and he said on our way into the dining-room that Octavia was a brick. We *had* such fun at dinner. Now that I have forgiven him, and have not to be thinking all the time of how nasty I can be, we get on splendidly.

Mr. Wertz was at the other side of me with Mrs. Pike; but as he is n't "running" them he had not to bother to talk to her, and he is really very intelligent, and we three had such an amusing time. Lord Valmond was in a lovely temper. Jane Roose said afterwards in the drawing-room that it was because Mrs. Smith was coming with the Courceys to the ball. Lady Doraine had drawn Mr. Pike, who is melancholy-looking, with a long Jew nose; but she woke him up and got him quite

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animated by dessert, and Mrs. Pike did not like it one bit. I overheard her speaking to him about it afterwards, and he said so roughly, "You mind your own climbing, Mary; you ought to be glad as it's a titled lady!" Well, then, by the time we were all assembled in the hall, every one began to arrive. Oh, it was so, so lovely! Every one looked at me as I stood beside Octavia at first, because they all knew the ball was given for me, and then for the first dance I danced with Tom, and after that I had heaps of partners, and I can't tell you about each dance, but it was all heavenly. I tried to remember what you said and not dance more than three times with the same person; but, somehow, Lord Valmond got four, and another — but that was an extra. *The Ball*

Mrs. Smith did come with the Courceys, and she was looking so smart with a beautiful gown on, and Jane Roose said it was a mercy Valmond was so rich; but I don't see what that had to do with it. I saw him dancing with her once, but he looked as cross as two sticks, perhaps because she

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The Ball was rather late. Do you know, Mamma, a lot of the beauties we are always reading about in the papers as having walked in the Park looking perfectly lovely were there, and some of them are *quite, quite old*—much older than you—and all trimmed up! Aren't you astonished? And one has a grown-up son and daughter, and she danced all the time with Dolly Tenterdown, who was her son's fag at Eton, Lord Doraine told me. Isn't it odd? And another was the lady that Sir Charles Helmsford was with on the promenade at Nice, when you would not let me bow to him, do you remember? And she is as old as the other!

Lord Doraine was rather a bother, he wanted to dance with me so often; so at last I said to Octavia I really was not at my first ball to dance with old men (he is quite forty), and what was I to do? And she was so cross with him, and I could see her talking to him about it when she danced with him herself next dance; and after that till supper he disappeared—into the smoking-room, I suppose, to play "Bridge."

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I went in to supper first with the Duke of Meath — he had just finished taking in Octavia — he is such a nice boy; and then, as we were coming out, we went down a corridor, and there in a window-seat were Lord Valmond and Mrs. Smith, and he was still gloomy, and she had the same green-rhubarb-juice look she had the last night at Nazeby. He jumped up at once, and said to me he hoped I had not forgotten I had promised to go in to supper with him, so I said I had just come from supper; and while we were speaking Mrs. Smith had got the Duke to sit down beside her, and so I had to go off with Lord Valmond, and he seemed so odd and nervous, and as if he were apologising about something; but I don't know what it could have been, as he had not asked me before to go in to supper with him. *At Supper*

He seemed to cheer up presently, and persuaded me to go back into the supper-room, as he said he was so hungry, and we found a dear little table, with big flower things on it, in a corner; but when we got there he only played with an ortolan and drank

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End of the Ball

some champagne, but he did take such a while about it; and each time I said I was sure the next dance was beginning he said he was still hungry. I have never seen any one have so much on his plate and eat so little. At last I insisted on going back, and when we got to the ball-room an extra was on, and he said I had promised him that, but I had n't. However, we danced, and after that, having been so long away at supper, and one thing and another, my engagements seemed to get mixed, and I danced with all sorts of people I hadn't promised to in the beginning. At last it came to an end, and when the last carriage had driven away, we all went and had another hot supper.

Mr. Pike would sit next to Lady Doraine, and he was as gay as a blackbird, and I heard Octavia saying to Lady Greswold that Carry had better hurry up and get that house in Park Street, or Lady Doraine would have it instead. Then we all went to bed, and Lord Valmond squeezed my hand and looked as silly as anything, and Jane Roose, who saw, said I had better be

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careful, as he was playing me off against Mrs. Smith. It was great impertinence of her, I think — don't you? — especially as Mrs. Smith had gone, so I can't see the point. — Now I am going to get up. Your affectionate daughter, *Tableaux*

ELIZABETH.

CHEVENIX CASTLE,
13th November.

DEAREST MAMMA, — I enjoyed myself last night quite as much as at the ball here; but first, I must tell you about Thursday and yesterday. The morning after the ball here no one came down till lunch, and in the afternoon Lady Doraine suggested we should have some tableaux in the evening, and so we were busy all the time arranging them. They were all bosh; but it was so amusing, Mrs. Pike lent every one her tea-gowns — she has dozens — and they did splendidly for the Queen of Sheba; and Mr. Pike played Charles I. having his head cut off, as Lady Doraine told him he had just the type of

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A Game of Patience

lofty melancholy face for that. I was the Old Woman in the Shoe, with all the biggest people for children; but the best of all was Dolly Tenderdown as "Bubbles." Lord Doraine and Mr. Wertz and Tom and some others played "Bridge" all the time while we were arranging them; but Lord Valmond was most useful, and in such a decent temper. After they were over we danced a little, and it was all delightful.

Yesterday, the day of the county ball in Chevenix, they shot again; and it rained just as we all came down ready to start for the lunch; so we could n't go, and had to lunch indoors without most of the men. Mr. Pike had n't gone shooting, because I heard Tom saying the night before to Lady Doraine that he would n't chance the party being murdered again, and that she must keep him at home somehow. So she did, and taught him Patience in the hall after lunch; and Mrs. Pike went and wanted to learn it too, but Lady Doraine — who was lovely to her — somehow did not make much room on the sofa, so she had to go and sit somewhere else.

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Half the people were playing "Bridge," and the rest were very comfortable, and smoking cigarettes, of course; so Mrs. Pike did too. Her case is gold, with a splendid monogram in big rubies on it; but I am sure it makes her feel sick, because she puffs it out and makes it burn up as soon as she can without its being in her mouth. She had to go and lie down after that, as she said she would be too tired for the ball; but nobody paid much attention. *A Broad Hint*

It was more lively at tea-time, when the guns came in. And Lord Doraine would sit by me; he talked about poetry, and said dozens of nice things about me, and all sorts of amusing ones about every one else; and Lord Valmond, who had gone to write some letters at a table near, seemed so put out with every one talking, that he could not keep his attention, and at last tore them up, and came and sat close to us, and told Lord Doraine that he could see Mr. Wertz was longing for "Bridge." And so he got up, and laughed in such a way, and said, "All right, Harry, old boy," and Valmond got crimson — I don't know what

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The Duchess's Ball

at — and looked as cross as a bear for a few minutes. We had rather a hurried dinner.

My white chiffon is as pretty as the tulle, and Octavia was quite pleased with me. There were omnibuses and two broughams for us to go in. Octavia took me with her alone in one. I wanted to go in one of the omnibuses — it looked so much gayer — but she would n't let me. It is not much of a drive, as you know, and we all got there at the same time almost, and our party did look so smart as we came in. Octavia sailed like a queen up the room to a carpeted raised place at the end, and there held a sort of court.

The Duchess of Glamorgan was already there with her three daughters, and their teeth stick out just like Mrs. Vavaseur's; only they look ready to bite, and she was always smiling. The men of their party were so young, and looked as if they would not hurt a fly, and the Duchess had me introduced to her and asked about you. And Mrs. Pike tried to join in the conversation, and the Duchess fixed on her

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pince-nez and looked at her for quite ten seconds, and then said, when she had retired a little, "Who is this gorgeous person?" And when I said Mrs. Pike, she said, "I don't remember the name," in a tone that dismissed Mrs. Pike from the universe as far as she was concerned; and Jane Roose says she is almost the only Duchess who won't know *parvenues*, and that is what makes her set so dull. *The Duchess's Ball*

There were such a lot of funny frumpy people at the other end of the room — "the rabble," Mrs. Pike called them. "Let us walk round and look at the rabble," she said to Lord Doraine, who was standing by her. And they went.

I had such lots of partners I don't know what any one else did; I was enjoying myself so, and I hope you won't be annoyed with me, as I am afraid I danced oftener than three times with Lord Valmond. Mrs. Smith seemed to be with the little Duke a great deal, and she glared at me whenever she passed. I like English balls much better than French, though, perhaps, I can't judge, as I was never at a

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The Ride Home

real one there. But Englishmen are so much better-looking, and everybody does n't get so hot, and it is nice having places to sit out and talk without feeling you are doing something wrong. Coming home, Octavia made Lady Doraine and Mrs. Pike go in her brougham, and she and I went in one of the omnibuses. Lord Doraine sat between me and Octavia, and I suppose he was afraid of crushing her dress, for he positively squashed me, he sat so close. Lord Valmond was at the other side of me, and somebody must have been pushing him, because he sat even nearer me than Lord Doraine, and between them I could hardly breathe; it was fortunate it was a cold night.

Before we got to the Park gates somehow the light went out, and all the way up the avenue people held each of my hands. I could not see who they were, and I tried to get them away, but I could n't, and I was afraid to kick like I did to Charlie Carriston, as it might have been Mr. Hodgkinson who was sitting opposite, and so there would have been no

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good in kicking Lord Doraine, or Lord Valmond; but I just made my fingers as stiff as iron and left them alone. It is a surprise to me, Mamma, to find that gentlemen in England behave like this, I call it awfully disappointing, and I am sure they could not have done so when you were young, it seems they are just as bad as the French. I told Octavia about it when she came to tuck me up in bed; and she only went into a fit of laughter, and when I was offended, she said she would see that the next time I went to a ball with her, that I had a chaperon on each side coming home. *An Awkward Situation*

I bowed as stiffly as I could in saying good-night to Lord Doraine and Lord Valmond, and they both looked so astonished, that perhaps it was Mr. Hodgkinson after all; it *is* awkward not knowing, is n't it? This morning all the guests are going, and on Monday, as you know, Tom and Octavia take me with them to stay at Foljambe Place, with the Murray-Hartleys for the Grassfield Hunt Ball. It will be fun, I hope, but I can never enjoy my-

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The Murray-Hartleys

self more than I have done here. — Now, good-bye, dear Mamma, your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

P.S. — Octavia says the Murray-Hartleys are n't people you would know, but one must go with the times, and she will take care of me. E.

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Foljambe Place

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FOLJAMBE PLACE

FOLJAMBE PLACE,
15th November.

DEAREST MAMMA, — We arrived here this afternoon in time for tea. It is a splendid place, and everything has been done up for them by that man who chooses things for people when they don't know how themselves. He is here now, and he is quite a gentleman, and has his food with us; I can't remember his name, but I daresay you know about him. *The Coat of Arms*

Everything is Louis XV. and Louis XVI., but it does n't go so well in the saloon as it might, because the panelling is old oak, with the Foljambe coats of arms still all round the frieze, and over the mantelpiece, which is Elizabethan. And I heard this — (Mr. Jones I shall have to call him) — say that it jarred

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The Coat of Arms

upon his nervous system like an intense pain, but that Mrs. Murray-Hartley would keep them up, because there was a "Murray" coat of arms in one of the shields of the people they married, and she says it is an ancestor of hers, and that is why they bought the place; but as Octavia told me that their real name was Hart, and that they hyphened the "Murray," which is his Christian name (if Jews can have Christian names) and put on the "ley" by royal licence, I can't see how it could have been an ancestor, can you?

They are quite established in Society, Octavia says; they have been there for two seasons now, and every one knows them. They got Lady Greswold to give their first concert, and enclosed programmes with the invitations, so hardly any of the Duchesses felt they could refuse, Octavia said, when they were certain of hearing the best singers for nothing; and it was a splendid plan, as many concerts have been spoilt by a rumour getting about that Melba was not really going to sing. Everybody smart is here. I am one of the few untitled people.

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Mrs. Murray-Hartley does n't look a bit Jewish, or fat and uneasy, like Mrs. Pike, but then this is only Mrs. Pike's first year. She — Mrs. M.-H. — is beautifully dressed, and awfully genial; she said it was "just more than delightful" of Octavia to bring me, and that it was so sweet of her to come to this friendly little party. "It is so much nicer to have just one's own friends," she said, "instead of those huge collections of people one hardly knows." There are quite twenty of us here, Mamma, so I don't call it such a very weeny party, do you?

A Friendly Little Party

My bedroom is magnificent, but it has n't all the new books as they have at Chevenix, and although the writing-table things are tortoise-shell and gold, there are n't any pens in the holders, that is why I am writing this in pencil. The towels have such beautifully embroidered double crests on them, and on the Hartley bit, the motto is "*La fin vaut l'eschelle.*" Octavia, who is in the room now looking at everything, said Lady Greswold chose it for them when they wanted a crest to have on their Sèvres plates and things for their concert.

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A Question of Taste

Octavia keeps laughing to herself all the time, as she looks at the things, and it puts me out writing, so I will finish this when I come to bed.

12.30. — We had a regular banquet, I sat next to Lord Doraine — I did not catch the name of the man who took me in — I forgot to tell you the Doraines and Sir Trevor and Lady Cecilia and lots of others I know are here. Mrs. Murray-Hartley does hostess herself, which Octavia says is very plucky of her, as both Lady Greswold, who gave her concert, and Lady Bobby Pomeroy, who brought all the young men, are staying in the house; and Octavia says it shows she is really clever to have emancipated herself so soon.

We had gold plate with the game, and china up to that, and afterwards Lady Greswold talked to Octavia, and asked her if she thought it would look better perhaps to begin gold with the soup, and have the *hors d'œuvres* on specimen Sèvres just to make a point. I hate gold plate myself, one's knife does make such slate-pencilish noises on it.

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Lord Valmond's Arrival

The man who took me in kept putting my teeth so on edge that I was obliged to speak to him about it at last. We had sturgeon from the Volga, or wherever the Roman emperors got theirs, but the plates were cold. Violins played softly all the time, behind a kind of Niagara Falls at the end of the room, which is magnificent; it is hung with aubusson, almost as good as what they had at Croixmare, which has been there always.

After dinner, while we were in the drawing-room alone, a note came for Mrs. Murray-Hartley. She was talking to Octavia and me, so she read it aloud; it was from Lord Valmond, and sent from the inn in the little town. He said he had intended staying there by himself for the Hunt Ball, but that on arrival he found no fire in his room, so he was writing to ask if Mrs. Murray-Hartley would put him up. She was enchanted, and at once asked Lady Greswold if it would not be better to turn Lord Oldfield out of his room — which is the best in the bachelors' suite — as he is only a baron; but Lady Greswold

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Lord Valmond's Arrival

said she did not think it would matter. I do call it odd, don't you, Mamma? because Lord Valmond told me, when he left Chevenix on Saturday, that he had to go to another party in Yorkshire, and was as cross as a bear because he would not be able to be at the Grassfield ball. He turned up beautifully dressed as usual, as quickly as it was possible for the brougham which was sent for him to get back. He could not have kept it waiting a moment; so I don't believe the story about there being no fire in his room, do you?

Mrs. Murray-Hartley did gush at him. Octavia says it is the first time she has been able to get him to her house, as he is ridiculously old-fashioned and particular, and actually in London won't go to places unless he knows the host and hostess personally. He stood with a vacant frown on his face all the time Mrs. Murray-Hartley was speaking, and a child could have seen he wanted to get away. It is in these kind of ways Frenchmen are more polite, because the Marquis always wore an interested grin when Godmamma kept him by her. He got

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away at last, and came across the room, but by that time Sir Trevor and Mr. Hodgkinson were talking to me, and there was no room for him on our sofa, and he had to speak to Lady Cecilia, who was near. She was as absent as usual, and he was talking at random, so their conversation was rather funny; I heard scraps of it. *Friendly Offers*

Mr. Murray-Hartley must be very nice, although he looks so unimportant, for all the men call him "Jim," and are awfully friendly. Lord Oldfield and Lord Doraine seem ready to do anything for him. Lord Oldfield offered to hunt about and get him just the right stables for his house in Belgrave Square; he knew of some splendid ones, he said, that were going a great bargain, on a freehold that belongs to his sister's husband. And Lord Doraine says he will choose his horses for him at Tattersall's next week, as he wants some good hunters; he knows of the very ones for him. "You leave it all to me, dear boy," he said; and at that Sir Trevor, who was listening (they were all standing close to our sofa) went into a guffaw of laughter. "Hunters," he

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A Sense of Honour

whispered, quite loud, "beastly little Jew, he'd have to have a rocking-horse, and hold on by its mane." And when I said I did not think one ought to speak so of people when one was eating their salt, he seemed to think that quite a new view of the case, and said, "By Jove! you are right, Elizabeth. Our honour and our sense of hospitality are both blunted nowadays."

Presently Lady Cecilia called Mr. Hodgkinson to her, and in one moment Lord Valmond had slipped into his place. I asked him why he was not in Yorkshire, and he said that he thought, after all, it was too far to go, and it was his duty to be at the Grassfield ball, as he has hunted with this pack sometimes. He looked and looked at me, and I don't know why, Mamma, but I felt so queer — I almost wish he had not come. I suppose Mrs. Smith is somewhere in this neighbourhood, and that is why he did not go to Yorkshire. Sir Trevor monopolised most of the conversation, until we all got up to play baccarat. I did not want to play as I don't know it, and Lord Valmond said it would be much nicer to sit

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and talk, but Mrs. Murray-Hartley would not hear of our not joining in; and Octavia handed me a five-pound note and said I was not to lose more than that, so I thought I had better not go on refusing, and we went with the rest into the saloon, where there was a long table laid out with cards and counters. *Playing Baccarat*

Lord Valmond said he would teach me the game, and that we would bank together; however, Lady Doraine sat down in the chair he was holding for me, and she put her hand on his coat sleeve and said in such a lovely voice, "Harry, it is ages since I have had a chat with you, sit down here by me." But he answered No, he had promised to show me how to play, and his mouth was set quite square. She looked so alluring I don't know how he could have done it, it was almost as flattering to me as the Vicomte's riding all night from Versailles. She laughed — but it was not a very nice laugh — and she said, "Poor boy, is it as bad as that?" and he looked back at her in an insolent way, as if they were crossing swords, but he said nothing

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Playing Baccarat

more, only we moved to the other side of the table, to where there were two empty chairs together.

When we sat down he said women were devils, which I thought very rude of him. I told him so, and he said I was n't a woman; but I remember now, Mamma, he called me a "little devil" that time when he was so rude at Nazeby, so it shows how inconsistent men are, does n't it? I sometimes think he would like to say all the nice things the Vicomte used to, only with Englishmen I suppose you have to be alone in the room for them to do that; they have not the least idea, like the French, of managing while they are speaking out loud about something else.

Every one looks very anxious here when they play; it is not at all a joke as the roulette used to be at Nazeby; and they do put a lot on, although counters don't seem to be much to look at. It is not at all a difficult game, Mamma, and some of the people were so lucky turning up "naturels," but we lost in spite of them at our side of the table, and Lord Doraine

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said at last, that it was because we — Lord Valmond and I — were sitting together. Valmond looked angry, but he chaffed back. I don't know what it was all about, and I was getting so sleepy, that when a fresh deal was going to begin I asked Octavia, who was near, if I might not go to bed. She nodded, so I slipped away. Lord Valmond followed, to light my candle he said, but as there is nothing but electric light that was nonsense. He was just beginning to say something nice, when we got beyond the carved oak screen that separates the staircase from the saloon, and there there were rows of footmen and people peeping in, so he just said "Good-night." *A Good-night*

And I also will say good-night to you, Mamma, or I shall look ugly to-morrow for the ball. — Love from your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

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FOLJAMBE PLACE,
16th November.

Bad Weather

DEAREST MAMMA, — I have just come up to dress for tea, but I find it is earlier than I thought, so I shall have time to tell you about to-day. It has absolutely poured with rain and sleet and snow and blown a gale from the moment we woke this morning until now — quite the most horrid weather I ever remember. All the men were in such tempers, as it was impossible to shoot. Mr. Murray-Hartley had prepared thousands of tame pheasants for them, Tom said, although this was n't to be a big shoot, only to amuse them by the way; and they were all looking forward to a regular slaughter.

Octavia, and I, and Lady Bobby, were among the few women down to breakfast besides our hostess, who is so bright and cheery in the morning; and when you think how morose English people are until lunch time it is a great quality. Some of the men came down ready to start, and these were the ones in the worst humour. After

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breakfast half of them disappeared to the stables, and the rest played "Bridge," except Lord Valmond and Mr. Hodgkinson, who wanted to stay with us, only we would not have them, so we were left to ourselves more or less. *An Amusing Mistake*

Mrs. Murray-Hartley took us to see the pictures and the collections of china and miniatures; and she talks about them all just like a book, and calls them simple little things, and you would never have guessed they cost thousands, and that she had not been used to them always, until she showed us a beautiful enamel of Madame de Pompadour, and called it the Princesse de Lamballe, and said so sympathetically that it was quite too melancholy to think she had been hacked to pieces in the Revolution; only perhaps it served her right for saying "*Après moi le déluge!*" Octavia was in fits, and I wonder no one noticed it. Then she said she must leave us for a little in the music-room, as she always went to see her children at this hour—they live in another wing.

By that time Lady Doraine and Lady Gres-

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Gossip

wold, and most of the others were down, and some of them looked as if they had been up awfully late. It seems they did not finish the baccarat until half-past three, and that Lord Oldfield won more than a thousand pounds. Mrs. Murray-Hartley had hardly got out of the door, when Lady Doraine said what a beautiful woman she was, and Lady Greswold began "yes and such tact," and Lady Bobby said, "and so charming," and Lady Cecilia — who was doing ribbon work on a small frame that sounds like a drum every time you put the needle through — looked up and drawled in her voice right up at the top, "Yes, I have noticed very rich people always are."

Then they all talked at once, and by listening carefully one made out that they were saying a nice thing about every one, only with a different ending to it, like: "she is perfectly devey but what a pity she makes herself so remarkable," and "Darling Florrie, of course she is as straight as a die, but wearing those gowns so much too young for her, and with that very French figure, it does give people a wrong impression,"

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and "It is extraordinary luck for dear Rosie, her husband's dying before he knew anything." I suppose it is all right, Mamma, but it sounds to me like giving back-handers. The French women never talked like this; they were witty and amusing and polite, just the same as if the men were in the room. *The Gossips Rebuked*

Octavia did not join in it, but read the papers, and when they got round to Mrs. Murray-Hartley again, and this time simply clawed her to pieces, Octavia looked up and said in a downright way, "Oh! come, we need none of us have known this woman unless we liked, and we are all getting the *quid pro quo* out of her, so for goodness' sake let us leave her alone." That raised a perfect storm, they denied having said a word and were quite indignant at the idea of getting anything out of her; but "It's all bosh," Octavia said, "I am here because it is the nearest house to the Grassfield ball, and the whole thing amuses me, and I suppose you all have your reasons." Lady Doraine looked at her out of the corner of her eyes, and said in her purry voice, "Darling Octavia — you are so

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Octavia's Philosophy

original," and then she turned the conversation in the neatest way.

Octavia said to me, as we went upstairs before lunch, that they were a set of cats and harpies, and she hated them all, only unfortunately the others — the nice good ones — taken *en bloc* made things so dull, it was better to put up with this set. Then she kissed me as I went into my room and said; "At this time of the world's day, my little Elizabeth, there is no use in fighting windmills."

At luncheon Lord Valmond sat next to me; he said we had been horrid not to have wanted him to spend the morning with us, and would I let him teach me "Bridge" afterwards? I said I really was not a bit interested in cards, but he said it was a delightful game, so I said All right. After lunch in the saloon I overheard Mrs. Murray-Hartley say to Lady Greswold that she feared this awful weather would make her party a failure, and what was she to do to amuse them this afternoon? So Lady Greswold said: "Leave 'em alone with plenty of opportunities to talk to their

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friends, and it will be all right." And so she did.

An Afternoon at Cards

Lord Valmond and I found a nice little table in a corner by the fire, and we began to turn over the cards, and presently every one disappeared, except Lady Doraine and Mr. Wertz, who played Patience or something, beyond one of the Spanish leather screens; and Lady Bobby and Lord Oldfield, who were smoking cigarettes together on the big sofa. We could just hear their voices murmuring. You can't play "Bridge" with only two people, I find, and when Lord Valmond had explained the principles to me, I was none the wiser. I suppose I was thinking of something else, and he said I was a stupid little thing, but in such a nice voice, and then we talked and did not worry about the cards. But after a while he said he thought it was draughty for me in the saloon, and it would be cosier in one of the sitting-rooms, but I would not go, Mamma, as I did not find it at all cold.

Then Lord Doraine came in, and went over and disturbed everybody in turn, and

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Lord Doraine intrudes

finally sat down by us, and Lady Bobby laughed out loud, and Lady Doraine peeped round the screen with her mischievous tortoise-shell cat expression, so I just said I would go and dress for tea, and came upstairs. I am sure they were all trying to make me feel uncomfortable, but I did n't a bit. I heard them shrieking with laughter as I left, and I caught a glimpse of Lord Valmond's face, and it was set as hard as iron.

Octavia wants me to wear my only other new ball dress to-night, the white gauze, so I suppose I must, and I do hope the rain will stop before we start. — With love from your affectionate daughter,

ELIZABETH.

P.S. — Agnès says she won't sup downstairs, as there was so much champagne in the " room " last night that several of the valets got drunk, and she thinks it is not *distingué*.

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FOLJAMBE PLACE,
Wednesday.

DEAREST MAMMA, — Octavia is writing to you, and we have such a piece of news for you! I will tell you presently. *Sir Hugh d'Eynecourt*

Part of the ball last night was quite delightful, and fortunately the rain had stopped before we started, in fact, I saw the stars shining when I looked out on my way down to tea. A new man had arrived, Sir Hugh d'Eynecourt, I remember you have often spoken of him. He is nice-looking though quite old, over forty, I should think. It appears he has been away from the world for more than two years; he has only come to this party now because Lady Bobby made him; he met her lately, and is a great friend of hers. The other men, Lord Doraine, &c., were chaffing him by the fireplace — no one else was down — and they did say such odd things. Tom asked him why he had disappeared for so long, and he said, Time was, when — if one stuck to one's own class — to live and love was within the reach of

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The Perfect Height

any gentleman, but since the fashion of the long strings of pearls came in, it had become more expensive than the other class, and he could not compete with Jews and financiers, so he had gone to live quietly in Paris. I don't know what it meant, but it seemed to amuse them all awfully.

When they saw me sitting on the sofa they stopped talking at once, and then began about how horrid the day had been; and Sir Hugh was introduced and asked about you. He said I was not nearly so pretty as you had been at my age, but I should do, he dared say. Then when I stood up, and he saw my height, he said that he had always thought five foot seven a perfect measure for women, so I said I did feel disappointed, as I was only five foot six and three-quarters; he laughed and whispered, "Oh yes, I am sure you will do — very well indeed." He is charming, and he says he will be an uncle to me.

At tea Octavia and he and I sat on the big sofa, and Lady Bobby did not like it a bit. She tried to talk to Lord Valmond, who was fidgeting about, looking as cross

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as a bear; but he would not stay still long enough to have any conversation. *The Quarrel*

As we were going upstairs afterwards, he ran after me and said he must tell me that Sir Hugh was not at all the kind of man I ought to talk so much to, and would I promise him the first dance to-night? I said No, that I was going to give it to Sir Hugh, and that he had better mind his own business or I would not dance with him at all. I was not really angry, Mamma — because he is so nice-looking — but one is obliged to be firm with men, as I am sure you know. He turned round and stamped down the stairs again, without a word, in a passion. At dinner, which I went in to with Mr. Wertz, Sir Hugh was at the other side, and you can't think how friendly we got. He says I am the sweetest little darling he has seen in a month of Sundays. I kept catching sight of Lord Valmond's face between the flowers — he had taken in Mrs. Murray-Hartley — and it was alternately so cross and unhappy looking, that he must have had violent indigestion.

We went to the ball in omnibuses and

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The Quarrel

broughams, the usual thing; but Octavia took care that I sat between her and Lady Cecilia. Mrs. Murray-Hartley *was* so beautifully dressed, and her jewels were superb, and everything in very good taste. She is really a very agreeable woman to talk to, Mamma, and one can't blame her for wanting to be in Society. It must be so much nicer than Bayswater, where they came from, and Octavia says it proves her intelligence; it is easier to rise from the gutter than from the suburbs.

Everybody had arrived when our party got to the ball. The Rooses are staying at Pennythorn, and Jane came and said to me at once how sorry she was to see me looking pale, and she hoped I would be able to enjoy myself — I was n't pale, Mamma, I am sure, but I did feel just a teeny bit sorry I had quarrelled again with Lord Valmond. He never came near me, and everything seemed to be at sixes and sevens; people got cross because I mixed up their dances quite unintentionally, and, I don't know why, I did not enjoy myself a bit, in spite of Sir Hugh saying every sort of lovely

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thing to me. I had supper with him, and Lord Valmond was near with Lady Doraine, and she was being so nice to him, Mamma, leaning over and looking into his eyes, and I don't think it good form, do you? Two or three dances afterwards, when we went back to the ball-room, there was a polka; I danced it with some idiot who almost at once let yards and yards of my gauze frills get torn, so I was obliged to go to the cloak-room to have it pinned up. *An Unpleasant Incident*

It was a long way off, and when I came out my partner had disappeared, and there was no one about but Lord Doraine, and the moment I saw him I hated the look in his eyes, they seemed all swimming; and he said in such a nasty fat voice: "Little darling, I have sent your partner away, and I am waiting for you, come and sit out with me among the palms," and I don't know why, but I felt frightened, and so I said, "No!" that I was going back to the ball-room. And he got nearer and nearer, and caught hold of my arm, and said, "No, no, you shall not unless you give me a kiss first." And he would not let me pass. I can't imagine why,

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The Engagement

Mamma, but I never felt so frightened in my life; and just then, walking aimlessly down the passage, came Lord Valmond.

He saw us and came up quickly, and I was so glad to see some one, that I ran to him, as Lord Doraine let me pass directly he caught sight of Harry — I mean Lord Valmond — and he was in such a rage when he saw how I was trembling, and said, "What has that brute been saying to you?" and looked as if he wanted to go back and fight him; but I was so terrified that I could only say, "Do come away!"

We went and sat in the palm place, and there was not a soul there, as every one was dancing; and I really don't know how it happened, I was so upset about that horrid Lord Doraine, that Harry tried to comfort me, and we made up our quarrel, and — he kissed me again — and I hope you won't be very cross, Mamma; but somehow I did not feel at all angry this time. And I thought he was fond of Mrs. Smith; but it is n't, it's Me! And we are engaged. And Octavia is writing to you. And I hope you won't mind. And

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the post is off, so no more. — From your affectionate daughter, ELIZABETH.

Victorine is outdone

P.S. — I shall get married before the Drawing-Room in February, because then I can wear a tiara.

P.S. again. — Of course an English marquis is higher than a French one, so I shall walk in front of Victorine anywhere, shan't I? E.

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